

LEISURE AND YOUTH POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Monday, 3 April 2017 at the Concorde Room, Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Liz Corps (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr P.I.C. Crerar
Cllr Sue Dibble
Cllr R.L.G. Dibbs
Cllr J.H. Marsh
Cllr M.L. Sheehan
Cllr L.A. Taylor

20. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd January, 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

21. PLAYGROUNDS

The Panel received a presentation from the Parks Development Officer, Mr. Andy Ford on the provision of playgrounds in the Borough. The presentation highlighted the benefits of playgrounds through learning and skills, healthy lifestyles, equality and diversity and community safety.

It was noted that the Borough had 39 playgrounds, three large, nine medium, eight medium/small and nineteen small. Fifteen of the 39 playgrounds had been refurbished in the last fourteen years. Coverage of play, from playgrounds in the Borough, was generally quite well distributed, with only a pocket of north-west Farnborough with less coverage.

In 2013, a survey had taken place on usage of the Council's playgrounds. A number of playgrounds had been visited twice a day for fifteen days, the results showed that destination playgrounds such as Aldershot Park and King George V Playing fields were, by far, the most well attended sites with the majority of the smaller sites having no visitors at all during the survey period.

The Panel reviewed the costs of maintaining and refurbishing all the playgrounds. Members were advised that external funding and developer contributions (Section 106 funds) had paid the majority of the costs of the fifteen refurbished playgrounds. It was noted that external funding had become more difficult to secure with Section 106 regulations now only allowing a maximum of five contributions to be pooled with the funds needing to be spent within a five year

period. These funds for play were only provided if playgrounds were not provided on the developments and could only be allocated to sites nearby. The developments also needed to be of ten or more properties to require them to provide contributions.

In conclusion, the Panel was advised that some of the older playgrounds were in urgent need of investment to ensure that facilities remained safe. Usage patterns had changed, with families being attracted to the larger playgrounds leaving smaller playgrounds less well used. Demographics might also have changed, which could have affected demand. The Panel was asked for its views on carrying out work to better identify levels of demand, priorities and options to continue to provide a safe and appropriate service.

The Panel discussed the presentation and endorsed the work being carried out and requested a report back in due course. A suggestion was also made to look at the option of sponsorship to help fund the refurbishment of playgrounds.

A discussion was also held around provisions for older children, similar to the youth shelter in Napier Gardens, Farnborough. It was recognised that the Council's approach to engaging with children and their families assisted in providing spaces suitable for all, gave a sense of ownership to young people and helped reduce the risk of vandalism and misuse.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Ford for his presentation.

22. OPEN SPACE - NEW HEALTH ACTIVITIES

Mr. Martin Sterio, Health and Physical Activity Officer, attended the meeting to give a presentation on new health activities. A number of events would be taking place across the Borough in the open green and urban spaces, these included:

- **Rushmoor Park Run** - launched in 2014, the Park run was a weekly 5K run at the Polo Fields, off Queens Avenue, Aldershot. An average of 300 runners participated each week making the run one of the largest in Hampshire. Around 25 volunteers were involved in the organisation and the Council worked closely with the Blackwater Valley Runners to co-ordinate the event.
- **Beat the Streets - Aldershot** – In March 2015 a walking initiative had been launched where people tapped a card against monitors around the town to record the number of miles they had covered over a four week period. 4,000 residents participated, including six schools and four community groups. Additional events had been held at the weekends, such as a community fun run, 5k Bingo Walk and a family cycle ride. A “Couch to 5k” running course for beginners had also been established. Six months on from the event, a survey had been carried out, the data from which showed that 73% continued to be more active, 47% took the car less and 71% continued to walk more often.
- **Rushmoor Wellesley 10K** – Launched in 2015 the Wellesley 10K covered the Polo Fields, Wellesley Woodlands and Basingstoke Canal.

The event ran in association with a number of local organisations including; Grainger, The Greater Nepalese Community and the Blackwater Valley Runners.

- **Breeze Cycle Rides** - Launched in 2015 the Breeze Cycle ride was for women only which took place bi-monthly in Rushmoor and the surrounding areas. Rushmoor had hosted the largest Breeze ride in Hampshire in 2016.
- **Farnborough Flyer Cycle Sportive** – Starting at The Village Hotel, Farnborough, this cycling event had hosted 300 riders participating in either, a 75 mile, 50 mile or 21 mile ride in 2016. The 2017 event was planned to accommodate 500 entrants, additional family, and junior rides. The event would be organised in partnership with VC Meudon Cycling Club, the Village Hotel, Pedal heaven Kids club and Decathlon.
- **Farnborough Winter Half Marathon** – This event had been launched in January 2017 with 2,000 runners. The route took in the business park, Southwood woodland, Basingstoke Canal and the airport perimeter. It was expected that 3,000 runners would take part in 2018. The event ran in partnership with 2:09 events, with support from TAG, BMW and Fluor.
- **Twilight Challenge** – Since 2012, TAG, in conjunction with the Community Matters Partnership, had hosted a 10k or 5k event on the airfield in June. 13,000 people had participated since 2012 by riding running, skating or walking on the airport runway at twilight.

The Panel noted the positive impact of the events, which included: greater numbers of adults and young people regularly exercising resulting in improved levels of wellbeing; increased civic pride; economic benefits; improved community cohesion; and, enhancement of the Council's credibility within the community through good working relationships with clubs and businesses.

It was suggested that an article should be included in the Arena magazine detailing the events for the whole year so residents were aware well in advance.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Sterio for his presentation.

23. **ALDERSHOT INDOOR POOLS AND LIDO - UPDATE**

An update was provided by Mr. Peter Amies, Head of Community and Environmental Services, on the Aldershot Indoor Pool and Lido complex.

The Panel compared the visions of the Working Group and the Friends of Aldershot Lido (FOAL) Group against the feedback from the soft market testing exercise. The visions compared well with the feedback to create a year round attraction, including a heated pool area with a splash pad facility, improved catering, changing and reception facilities and to provide an adventure golf area. The soft market testing had also highlighted scope for increasing the cost in line with feedback from previous public consultation.

The Panel was advised that outcomes from the soft market testing had highlighted two main options for the Aldershot Indoor Pools:

- Option 1 – Retain the building with self-funded improvements. The advantage to this would be a potential saving of £180k per annum. The disadvantages would be the lifecycle costs of the building, increased competition from new facilities in the surrounding area, increased operating costs and the difficulty of achieving the vision of integration with the Lido.
- Option 2 – A new build could result in reduced operating costs and increased income that would enable an £8 million investment at no additional cost to the Council. The advantages were a guaranteed 50/60 years life, a landmark building with increased participation, income and lower running costs. This would also allow full integration with the Lido. The disadvantages would be a significant reduction in cost savings.

The Panel then noted the main options, from the outcomes of the soft market testing, for the Aldershot Lido:

- Option 1 – retain the existing unheated body of water and improve the reception, changing and café at a capital cost of around £200k. Both the lido season and usage (25,000 per annum) would remain the same.
- Option 2 – replace the unheated pool with a 50 metres heated pool and Splashpad. The capital cost would be around £3 million. The season would increase from 76 days to 183 days and attendance figures would average at 55,000 per year.

The Panel was advised that both options would include a year round adventure golf facility which would attract around 70,000 visits and, with an increase of £1 on the admission charge, provide savings to the Council of up to £90,000 per annum.

The Panel noted the advantages of a new build and the procurement process, in particular that a new build would provide a facility that offered improved integration with the Lido and increased levels of participation. The lido season would be extended and with both increased use and reduced costs would make it much more sustainable. The 50 metres pool would allow for both fun water time and more formal lane swimming particularly by clubs. The splash pad area would appeal to the younger children and the Adventure Golf to all ages. The preferred procurement option would be on a Design, Build, Operate and Maintain basis, which would put the onus on the operator to provide a more financially sustainable facility.

The Panel discussed the presentation and highlighted the need to assess traffic management options in the area. It was noted that additional parking through decking could be provided on the site.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Amies for his presentation. The Panel **ENDORSED** the proposals for submission to the Cabinet for consideration.

24. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel **NOTED** the current work programme.

The meeting closed at 8.56 pm.

CLLR LIZ CORPS (CHAIRMAN)
