

ALDERSHOT LIDO REVIEW

17TH OCTOBER 2016

Titchbourne Suite, Princes Hall, Aldershot at 6.00p.m.

Attendees – Cr. Mike Roberts, Cr. Maurice Sheehan, Cr. Liz Corps, Cr. Bruce Thomas (in the Chair) Cr. Alex Crawford, Anne Newton, Peter Amies, Dave Whitehouse, Ashley Sharpe and Adele Taylor.

Apologies – Cr. Adrian Newell

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING –

The minutes were agreed.

2. LIDO SOFT MARKETING TESTING EVENT –

Mr. Amies advised that due to other commitments the soft market testing work would be collated during November. It was advised that nine major companies had shown an interest and four of these had assisted in helping to shape the options on the way forward.

The options ranged from making relatively low cost changes to enhance the existing facilities – this would not have a significant impact on the numbers attending or the level of subsidy. The invest to save option, which could result in a revamp of the whole site would be more likely to extend the season, significantly increase the levels of usage and reduce the subsidy.

The invest to save option had been most popular with the companies who had attended the soft market testing event. There was a strong view that in order to significantly reduce the subsidy, consideration should be given to reducing the size of the cold water pool and introducing a heated pool area and to consider incorporating the indoor pools as part of any major development. The Council has commissioned a condition survey and lifecycle costs for the pools.

It was advised that an overhaul of the site would take up to 18 months to complete, subject to the scale of any new build and would have significant investment implications, with any loss of interest on investment needing to be considered.

Mr. Amies was preparing a paper summarising the soft market testing for consideration by the Working Group, Panel and Cabinet. A decision on the way forward would need to be made by the end of the 2016/17 financial year.

3. **2016 LIDO SEASON - UPDATE -**

Dave Whitehouse, Places for People (PfP) advised on the 2016 summer season at the Lido. Due to the excellent weather over the summer period, the season had been considered a success. Attendance figures had been in the region of 45,000, this was the same as 2014 and 2015 combined. August alone had seen 29,000 visits – more than the whole season for 2015.

Fast track queuing had been introduced for 2016; this allowed members and cardholders faster access. During August, PfP increased staff resources for the fast track lane due to high demand. Other new initiatives for 2016 were early morning lane swimming and an increased discount for military personnel and families, from 10% to 20% - the up take on this had not been as good as expected.

Social media had been used to promote the facility, Facebook likes had increased by 980% on the previous season and the website had seen almost double the hits than in previous years. Discounted tickets had been made available through Eagle Radio, which in turn increased the publicity for the Lido.

It was noted that Guildford Lido had been advertised at Aldershot Train Station. Consideration should be given to advertising with South West Trains/Network Rail in the future, both at the station and possibly on railway bridges.

It was reported that the Council had received its £20,000 as part of the profit share agreement with PfP; this made the Council £6,000 better off from the profit share deal over a two-year period.

It was advised that trends showed that after two – three days of good weather, visitor numbers increased. During 2016, water temperatures had reached 23-24°, the same temperature that the heated Guildford Lido. Good weather was a massive factor in producing a good season.

The Group discussed signage for the Lido and were advised of the restrictions imparted by Hampshire County Council (HCC) and the Highways department – this issue would however be raised again with HCC. It was reported that consideration was being given to Digital Advertising on the M3 near the Hawley Lane junction; if the scheme went ahead the Lido could be advertised on this platform.

4. **FOAL – UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL LIDO CONFERENCE –**

Cr. Crawford and Anne Newton, FOAL, reported on their visit to the National Lido Conference (see attached papers). It was noted that funding was being sought through “crowd funding” for a National Lido Guide, 30% of the amount required had been raised to date and anyone could contribute with a minimum of £30.

FOAL had also compiled a list of events, for consideration, for the 2017 season, these included; an outdoor cinema, fun days and an Aquathlon (running and swimming) event. It was agreed that a meeting would be set up to include PfP, RBC and FOAL to discuss these suggestions further.

5. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING -**

6. It was suggested that a date could be set in December, 2016 to review possible events for next season and an update on the soft market testing. A date would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting closed at 6.52p.m.