

Minutes of: PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (LEISURE)

Date of Meeting: 6 August 2009

PRESENT: Councillor Sandiford (Chair)
Councillors Driver (substituting for L Barnes), Lamb, Neal, Robertson (substituting for Crawforth), Stansfield and Thorne

IN ATTENDANCE: Phil Seddon, Head of Finance
Mike Riley, Communities Manager
Pat Couch, Scrutiny Support Officer
Martin Kay, Acting Chief Executive, Rossendale Leisure Trust
Norman Hauserman, Chair, Rossendale Leisure Trust
Councillor Brian Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources
Councillor Aldred
Councillor Forshaw
Councillor Crawforth (for part of meeting)

ALSO PRESENT: 1 Member of the public

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Martin Kay, the new Acting Chief Executive of Rossendale Leisure Trust and asked that thanks be sent to Gary Hood, Chief Executive of the Trust who had recently resigned.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Barnes, Gledhill and Graham, Bernard Divine, Co-opted Member, Ian Cameron and Adrian Leather, invitees.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 23 June 2009 be approved as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Driver declared a personal interest as she was Chair of the Bacup Leisure Hall Review Panel.

Councillor Lamb declared a personal interest as she was a Member of the Bacup Leisure Hall Review Panel.

5. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to report.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public expressed concern that due to the timing of the meeting he had not been given the opportunity to discuss the reports with the full Board of Rossendale Leisure Trust, who were not due to meet until the following week. The Chair asked the member of the public to discuss this with the relevant Leisure Trust Members, as the meeting had been arranged to fit in with the Chair and Interim Chief Executive of the Leisure Trust and explained that the date had been altered to fit in with them due to annual leave.

7. LEISURE REVIEW 2009

The Communities Manager presented an update on the key tasks of the 2009 Leisure Review. He highlighted the continued work on each of the key actions under the review to ensure the delivery of Option H, which was the preferred option agreed at Council in February 2009.

The Culture and Leisure questionnaire was now available on the Council's website and had also sent to the Citizen's Panel Members on 3rd August. The questionnaire covered priorities for facilities, countryside recreation, the arts and taking part in arts, sports and leisure in Rossendale.

Knight, Kavannagh and Page (KKP) consultants had been awarded the contract for the Options Appraisal for the delivery of leisure services and an initial meeting with them had already taken place. The Chair informed the Committee that an interim report from the consultants would be presented to the next meeting in October.

The Committee received an update from the Pool Review Panel, Bacup Leisure Hall Panel and Ski Rossendale Panel Meetings.

The Communities Manager indicated that in relation to the Ski Slopes, meetings had been held individually with all user groups to discuss the scope of the project. The Council had met with user groups and residents interested in joining the Ski Rossendale Review Panel. Councillor Swain had agreed to Chair this meeting.

The Chair commented that the Ski Rossendale Review Panel needed to be set up quickly in order to keep to timescales for a final report to be presented to Cabinet in December.

The Acting Chief Executive of the Leisure Trust gave a brief outline of the numerous reports presented to the Committee, which included a progress update on each of the Trust's facilities.

There was discussion on the amount of grant money that had been available to the Trust, a report of which had been presented at the last meeting. The Chair of the Leisure Trust provided clarification of the process of grant funding.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to the following:

- Car Parking at the Haslingden Lifestyle Centre - the Communities Manager indicated that work on creating a temporary hard core car park, with lighting, will commence 24 August
- Public Meeting to discuss a way forward - The Chair of the Bacup Leisure Hall Review Panel indicated that this had now been arranged for 17 September at Bacup Leisure Hall
- Ski Rossendale – The Acting Chief Executive of the Trust informed the Committee that there was a short term action plan for the facilities and that the Trust were working through these actions
- Concerns of staff at the Ski Slopes - The Acting Chief Executive of the Trust had been keeping the staff updated, although the Trust accepted that staff were leaving due to uncertainty.

The Chair of Rossendale Leisure Trust raised concern that the report, presented to Members indicated that the Trust continues to forecast an overall loss of £698k, which was in line with original grant funding expectations. He indicated that he had been contacted by members of the public who thought the Trust were losing even more money, when in fact the £698k referred to the actual grant.

The Chair asked the Trust if they intended to ask the Council for the cash flow support which the Council had agreed to give the Trust, which had not yet been requested. The Chair of the Leisure Trust confirmed that further money would be requested before the end of the financial year.

Resolved:

1. That the Leisure Performance Overview and Scrutiny note the work undertaken to date in delivering Option H.
2. That the Committee receives a brief outline of the capital expenditure of buildings managed by the Trust.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Signed
(Chair)

Date.....