

## CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 20 MARCH 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Gerry Clark (Chairman), Carwyn Cox (Vice-Chairman), Marion Mills, Julian Sharpe and Claire Stretton

Also in Attendance: Councillor E Wilson

Officers: Andy Jeffs, Shilpa Manek, Kevin Mist and Mark Taylor

### WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all to the Meeting and carried out introductions of all attending.

### APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Diment, Luxton and Shelim. Councillor Mills was substituting at the meeting.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

No Panel Member had been subject to Group instruction as to how to vote on any matter.

### MINUTES

It was Unanimously Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2018 were approved as a true and correct record.

The Vice Chairman pointed out that since Councillor Stretton was not in attendance since she was at another council meeting, the item on the Cultural Quarter would be briefed on and would be on the Agenda for the next meeting in more detail. Councillor Stretton would join the meeting later.

It was Unanimously Agreed that the order of the Agenda would be changed.

### UPDATE ON THE CULTURAL QUARTER

The Executive Director, Russell O'Keefe, updated the Panel on the cultural quarter. Officers had been working with a range of stakeholders and proposals were still evolving. The proposals included the refurbishment of the Desborough Suite and the Heritage Centre, there would be a large eat/drinking and socialising space with high quality public grounds. Currently, it was still work in progress. The Executive Director would provide a further update at a future meeting.

**ACTION: Executive Director to provide update at next meeting.**

### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Andy Jeffs, Executive Director went through the report for the Panel.

The Chairman requested for the next report, that specific areas where there had been slippage and/or a need of improvement or very positive points were highlighted. This would assist the Panel to have a better balanced view.

Councillor Stretton asked about the increase in organisations for grants and asked about the aspirations. The Lead Member informed the Panel that the borough was looking to broaden the organisations with private grants as well as support the current organisations too. This was being done by considering a wider range of organisations to support, especially within the culture sector. The borough were also promoting organisations that had been accepted and had received a grant to encourage other organisations to apply, all through the year.

The Vice Chairman asked what analysis had been completed to see why there had been a drop in footfall in town centre. The Executive Director informed the Panel that it was the first time that this was measured in this way, it was a straight forward projection. The drop had been because of the season, Winter. The PI only showed whether the footfall in the town centre had increased or decreased, however the target was covering three very different urban centres into one target, Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot. Would it be more beneficial to have a subject that had more detail about each individual area.

**ACTION: Further breakdown for each individual area requested.**

Councillor E Wilson suggested that figures for each quarter in isolation were not very useful, however, if figures were shown for year to date or annually then the Panel would get a fuller picture. The Executive Director confirmed that this would be possible and would discuss with the lead officer and report back to the Panel.

The Vice Chairman requested a better understanding of the individual areas and asked what could be done further with the figures.

The Panel noted the progress.

PRESENTATION FROM THE OLD COURT, WINDSOR ARTS CENTRE

Martin Denny, Managing Director of Martin Denny Management Ltd, (MDM) updated the Panel on The Old Court in Windsor, Windsor's arts centre, and formerly known as The Firestation.

MDM took over The Old Court at the beginning of October 2017. Martin Denny reported that during the first two weeks, substantial internal refurbishment took place to make the venue more welcoming and improve its look and feel. The venue was reopened to the public in mid-October 2017 to carry on with existing bookings. The venue was then closed in mid-December 2017 at the instruction of the Borough's Shared Building Services Team for further work and reopened on 5 March 2018. The building was in a much worse state than was expected and the work was more urgent than initially appreciated. The project had great support from the Lead Member, Councillor Samantha Rayner and the Lead Officer, Mark Taylor.

Councillors Mills and Stretton joined the meeting at 7.05pm.

The venue would now serve the community in a much better way offering a wide range of performances. Events that were being discussed included a comedy series, jazz, cinema, art days, exhibitions, classical concerts, DJ and clubbing nights and a children's programme.

MDM has now moved its offices to The Old Court.

The Chairman thanked Martin Denny for a comprehensive presentation and for providing a range of activities for the community and that the plan taken forward by the company for the renovation and reform was done so with minimum disruption. The Chairman asked how much of the suggested programme had been driven by demand? Martin Denny explained that it was

a combination of demand and insights, residents would like to use the space that provides suitable facilities, they had tried to look at all audiences, listened to the 'chatter' of the community, had the desire to build up a reputation in live quality music in differing genres and a significant arts centre for residents.

Councillor Stretton commented that it was very impressive that regular permanent hires had been fixed so quickly after the renovation. Was there going to be a challenge if the community wanted to hire the venue? Martin Denny explained that there was a plan to maximise the space and invite theatre companies over the summer holidays. Councillor Stretton asked if the projector and surround sound systems had been considered for different usages. Martin Denny informed the Panel that all had been considered and flexibility of the spaces had been improved.

Councillor Sharpe asked if closing the venue had helped and was informed that there had been a smooth transition between the two tenders and the break had enabled them to think more clearly about what was actually wanted and needed, so it was very beneficial.

Councillor Ed Wilson asked how much the refurbishment cost and was advised that the cost of the refurbishment was £440K, this was a combination of the sinking fund for amendments to buildings and councils capital budget and a further £65K from the new tenant, who had got some of that from the grant funding. Councillor Ed Wilson asked how the venue was going to be re-advertised. Martin Denny explained that they were trying to create a good feeling in the venue to encourage people to come and use the facilities and then come back again and facilitating word of mouth promotion, the breadth of the programme would help to raise its profile, also by tapping into a network of local relationships and promoting through a number of more traditional methods.

Councillor Sharpe asked about the comparison of this venue with Norden Farm and was informed that both venues were working together and sharing ideas. It was a great asset for the borough to have two strong art centres in the two main towns.

The Vice Chairman stated that this was an investment that needed to happen and it was a shame that it was not happened sooner. Councillor Cox asked how the investment was going to be measured and was informed by Mark Taylor that there were significant key performance indicators, similar to Norden Farm. In addition regular meetings took place between the council and the new tenants.

**ACTION: Report to Panel at a future meeting.**

The Panel agreed that this was a great news story and should be advertised.

**ANNUAL UPDATE ON OPERATION FOR LEISURE CENTRES**

Mark Camp-Overy, General Manager, Legacy Leisure, gave a presentation on the operation for leisure centres. Attached.

Mark Camp-Overy informed the Panel of the key detail covered in the report. The report covered the period 1 January to 31 December 2017, the third year of the partnership.

The past twelve months had been a challenging time for Legacy Leisure especially as a result of economic uncertainty impacting consumer choice and this had been noted through some of the casual usage trends.

Overall attendance was 1.8 million, showing a marginal decrease compared to 2016 but that had included a period of closure for the leisure pool at the start and end of the year and other competition.

The key highlights for the Windsor contract included:

- **Events Diversification of bookings** - notably a South Indian show that added the Magnet in between their shows at Birmingham NEC and O2.
- **Aquazone** - Attracted more to swimming lessons - offering more classes and aligning the programme times to be as effective as possible for families.
- **Children's activities** - Reviewed holiday provisions. Re-energised the programme and achieved an average attendance of 92% throughout 29 of the summer holidays in 2017 - 1334 attendees.
- **Group Exercise** - attracted more to workout together - offering a new and exciting class timetable and developing more studio space
- **Partnerships** - Took on the operational management of Marlow Road community centre from August 17 on behalf of the Council.
- **Health & Safety** - External audits carried out in 2017, all sites achieving over 80% with Magnet at 87% and Windsor achieving 91% in its largest audit.
- **Environmental Management** - Continue to commit to reducing our carbon footprint. Both the main sites building management systems now fully use to manage consumption in line with operations.
- **Training** - Strengthened partnership with Lifetime to provide education pathways to new and existing staff.
- **Apprentices** - Legacy joined the 5% club and is one of the highest performers in the sector for attracting and retaining apprentices.
- **Retail** - Launched a new menu in the cafes with an even wider range of healthy products to choose from
- **Sports Development** - Linked with national governing bodies including Swim England, England Triathlons and the latest with England Squash - This Girl Can campaign at Magnet Leisure Centre. Resident volunteer to increase participation.
- **Social Media** - Facebook over 5000 followers: up 48% on 2016; Over 6,564 enquiries; Over 1 million page views

It was evident that participation in structured activities such as swimming lessons had performed well from the swimming lessons. There had been an increase of 427 to 2783, during the service period. School swimming had continued to engage and educate children on water safety with 900 children from 30 schools participating each week. Working with the National Aquatics Manager, both Windsor and Magnet swim programmes supported national campaigns such as water safety, getting safe for summer and drowning prevention. A few appointed apprentices supported qualified teachers to deliver lessons, benefitting from on the job training whilst completing their qualifications in swimming teaching. There are now 14 apprentices on qualification programmes across the leisure centres, ten of which are local residents. The apprentices currently appointed are training in sales management, leisure attendants, customer service and fitness instruction. The membership for health and fitness had gone up to 6789, which showed a 4.8% net gain on 2016.

A fixed and flexi membership was introduced throughout the service period, in response to the changing behaviour in casual use, this was well received.

Mark Camp-Overy explained to the Panel that it was crucial for centres to offer and attract a wide range of users and non-users to engage in an active lifestyle by offering a diverse range of programmes and offers to suit everyone.

On average, the sites welcomed over 5000 users per day, so managing the demand on the facilities was a constant focus for the site teams. Cleanliness and housekeeping had both been raised in feedback and after additional measures had been put into place, this had significantly improved.

Of the 1.8m visitors that came to the centres, there was a reported 909 customer feedback reports of complaints, compliments and comments. We actively engage customers to comment on their experiences and have many ways for customers to get in touch.

Pool feedback at Windsor was highlighted from feedback in 2016. In the last year with the introduction of Front of House customer care team, general assistants in the pool changing village and full time cleaners in the pool hall throughout peak times has worked well to maintain standards.

Planned replacements were co-ordinated with the client officer. Boiler replacement at Magnet, Changing rooms at Windsor, Court works at Charters, Changing room upgrades and fire door work at Cox Green, Heating and water works at Furze Platt.

Health and safety remains the Number 1 priority. There were 836 reported accidents and incidents in 2017. A breakdown of the incidents highlight slips and trips during sporting activities make up the dominant cause. The centre's continue to review risk assessments and take proactive action in a number of areas to positively impact activities. An example of such action is the Roller disco where the floor space has been increased for beginners and the number of stewards have been increased to help novice skaters. The centres have also invested in a slip test monitor to record and monitor flooring conditions in all areas.

A new Fitness and Retention Manager has been appointed across all sites purely to work with members to ensure they are getting the most out of their workouts and to develop the customer journey and enhance the fitness community experience.

Mark Camp-Overy and his team are also:

- adapting group fitness to bring in new genres
- having more diversification with cultural events to attract more non-users to the sites
- introducing of the online swimming lesson platform with home portal so parents can track swimming progress in real time.
- Introducing a new sports development programme for holiday activities and participation opportunities.
- Introducing a new Sway dance outreach programme with local schools.
- Corporately - there was a new app under development to make accessing, booking and recording attendance at the centres a more streamlined process.

The Panel discussed the following points:

- The growth of usage at all centres and advertising that was used such as the school newsletter at Furze Platt.
- The team were focussing on the customer journey, from the point they walked into a centre to the time they left and concentration on how to make it better.
- The team monitored the centres to understand who were using them, for what and why.
- Sports England carried out an actual score. RBWM had a high scoring nationally but the borough still had a long way to go.

The Chairman summed up all discussions and the Panel were happy to hear that the centres were running well. The Chairman requested that it would be useful to have benchmarking data with other boroughs and nationally. The Chairman suggested that this good news should be effectively communicated to residents.

The Panel suggested that it would be very beneficial to invite users to try all facilities at the new leisure centre before the Magnet was closed and before the new leisure centre had opened so that there was a smooth transfer from one to the other. All areas of the new centre should be tried and tested before the grand opening.

**ACTION: Look to advertise all the good news about the leisure centre. Kevin Mist to contact the Communications Team.**

**ACTION: Look into offering a trial day to users before the grand opening of the new leisure centre and the closure of the Magnet.**

## BRAYWICK LEISURE CENTRE

Kevin Mist, Community Project Lead, gave a presentation on the Braywick Leisure Centre (Attached).

The main point discussed after the presentation included the testing of the new centre, the maintenance of it and the promotion of the centre.

The Panel were very concerned about the testing of the new centre before opening. Kevin Mist informed the Panel that the borough would be working with the builders until June/July 2018. The centre would be up and running a month before the handover. All areas of the centre needed to be tried and tested before the main opening to avoid reputational damage. Kevin Mist advised the Panel that operational testing would take place for three weeks before and the Panel were not reassured that this would be sufficient. The Panel suggested that further testing was crucial using many different groups of users and using all aspects of the new centre to cover all malfunctions.

The date of the opening was not currently being advertised, this would be considered once completion had been achieved and a new operator had been selected.

The second point that was discussed was the maintenance of the centre including the cost and all risks.

The promotion of the new centre was discussed and it was highlighted that many Windsor residents had no knowledge of the new centre. It was noted that active promotion would take place at Windsor Leisure Centre.

Kevin Mist highlighted to the Panel that this was still work in progress and the borough was working very closely with all key partners.

The Vice Chairman inquired about where the financial scrutiny would sit and was advised that the management board would be meeting monthly, they would receive a financial report, key points of the budget would be discussed with the Lead Member of Culture and Communities and Finance, at a granular level. Regular reports would be presented to Cabinet, Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panels. It had already been agreed that Braywick Leisure Centre would be a standing item on the agenda until the launch.

**ACTION: The Head of Cost Management would be invited to a future meeting.**

## SHARING OF SPORTS FACILITIES

Kevin Mist, Community Project Lead, gave a presentation on the sharing of sports facilities (Attached).

The Panel noted the points from the presentation and raised the following points:

- The Chairman asked for the statistics for the Thames Valley Athletics Centre.
- Councillor Stretton highlighted a specific issue in her ward but could be relevant to other wards, pitches that were used by other people caused year round noise for residents.

- The Lead Member informed the Panel that discussions were in progress with other schools and colleges to allow more shared use. Currently RBWM were in discussions with Eton College.
- Councillor E Wilson was still concerned as all five different examples given were all different, there was no standard, clear line or all the responsibilities. There were no clear lines of who owned what and who was doing what, especially with academy schools. Kevin Mist informed the Panel that the report had only concentrated on the five schools that the borough had facility agreements with. Kevin Mist reported that there had been no issues over the last 30 years. Councillor E Wilson was concerned about Academies Act being missed which says that academies are free from the council.
- Councillor E Wilson still wanted to know who was accountable, where was the public money to be used, where was the public money coming from. A clear line was required.
- Councillor Cox wanted more information about legal liabilities and where they lied.

The Chairman summed up that information was still required on governance and agreements and liabilities and responsibilities.

**ACTION: Report to be on a future Agenda.**

#### WORK PROGRAMME

It was agreed by the Panel to have an update on the cultural quarter.

#### DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Panel Members noted that the next meeting was on Wednesday 16 May 2018 at 18.30 in the Council Chamber.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 9.30 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....