
LEISURE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth on Wednesday 13 October 2021 between 7.30pm and 9.59pm.

Councillors present:

Chris Lloyd (Lead Member for Leisure)
Paula Hiscocks
Raj Khiroya
Stephen King
David Major
Alex Michaelis

Phil Williams (Lead Member Environmental Services and Sustainability)
Debbie Morris
Alison Scarth
Andrew Scarth
Alison Wall

Also in attendance:

Ray Figg – Head of Community Services
Rebecca Young – Head of Community Partnerships
Joanna Hewitson - Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer
Sally Riley – Finance Manager
Jamie Russell - Committee Manager

External Speakers:

Mark Leahy, Sports and Leisure Management
John Sewell, Sports and Leisure Management
Peta Mettam - Citizens' Advice Service Three Rivers

Councillor Chris Lloyd in the Chair

LEC 08/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Roger Seabourne and Councillor Jon Tankard with Councillor Raj Khiroya and Councillor Andrew Scarth attending as substitute Members. Apologies were also received from Councillor Lisa Hudson, with Councillor Alison Wall attending as a substitute Member.

LEC 09/21 MINUTES

A Member wished to amend the minutes of the last meeting, removing Moor Park from the list of parish councils and from the list of housing association in Appendix 1 on pages 5 and 6 and be included in the list of consultees either in its own category as a private estate management company or under the heading "other". The minutes of the Leisure, Environment and Community Committee meeting held on Wednesday 07 July were confirmed as a correct record, with the amendment

noted above and would be signed by the Chair of the meeting when it was possible to do.

LEC 10/21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

LEC 11/21 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cllr David Major declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 as a member of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

LEC 12/21 LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGEMENT CONTRACT – SPORTS AND LEISURE MANAGEMENT (SLM) WORKPLAN

The Committee received the attached presentation from two representatives from SLM, Mark Leahy, Regional Contract Manager and John Sewell, Area Contract Manager who provided the annual presentation to Members to reflect back on the previous 12 months work.

Members asked what was the relationship between Everyone Active and SLM was, were SLM responsible for works that would prevent flooding occurring near Rickmansworth Golf Course, and what healthy products were available to purchase from SLM operated vending machines and were there any plans to increase these products?

It was confirmed that;

- Everyone Active was the customer brand with SLM being the name registered with Companies House.
- SLM was partly responsible for remedial works, some of which had been completed earlier that day in the form of gulley repairs, with other factors currently sitting with Three Rivers District Councils Property Team.
- The slush offered was 100% sugar free, with muesli and granola bars and lower calories or sugar free alternatives to chocolate also available. SLM were also always working with suppliers to offer alternatives to their current range.

Members asked how SLM would cover the financial losses incurred since the impact of Covid-19.

The service provider confirmed that their management contract with Three Rivers District had been restructured to assist SLM, waiving the management fee in the short term to be paid back over the length of the contact.

Members asked for details of this.

The Head of Community Services said it was an urgent decision taken in consultation with Group Leaders, and the financial element would be covered in the Budget Monitoring agenda item later in the meeting.

SLM are working with consultants called Carbon Intelligence to guide them down the net zero emissions pathway and have a further meeting with Centrica in late November who may be engaged as the delivery arm of any improvement works identified.

The panels at William Penn are solar thermal panels and are about 80% repaired with the anticipated completion date being the end of November with the delay caused by the availability of key parts. Once the work is complete the panels will assist with the heating of the swimming pool water.

SLM has given consideration to wind power but it is not a priority as far the renewable energy sources go. With the overwhelming majority of our centres being in heavily residential areas and significant infrastructures required to get the amount of energy from wind power that would make a difference it just isn't a logical route to pursue currently.

Members asked if there were any plans to add electric charging points to the car parks at either centre.

The service provider confirmed that the cabling was there, but there was no plans to add charging points in the near future.

Members asked if the targets numbers of usage presented were realistic.

The service provider advised that they may not be, as people will exercise in different ways now, and that the next few months were very important for rebuilding the business.

Members asked what marketing would be done to increase usage.

The service provider said this will include targets advertisement from Facebook and Google, promoting other services to school swimming classes in additional to existing joining offers.

Members asked SLM to consider stop selling bad food from their vending machines and requested what they presently offer.

Post meeting note: **Healthy Vend Options**

- Baked Walkers Crisps – Ready Salted, Cheese and Onion, Salt & Vinegar,
- Snack A Jack – Salt and Vinegar, Sour Cream and chive, Sweet Chilli,
- Eat Natural Bars,
- Yes Bars,
- Sun Valley Nuts,
- Perkier Bars,
- 99% small Nestle bars,
- Juicy Raising and Juicy Apricot
- Bear Yoyo Blackcurrant or Strawberry

Polar Krush – Slush puppies

All of the flavours have been reformulated without sugar. The range is a guilt-free treat, made with natural colours and flavours, completely allergen free – and sweetened naturally with stevia, meaning almost zero calories.

The Head of Community Services said that while greater choice is a good thing, ultimately it comes down to giving service users a choice. He added that SLM should be doing more in offering a wider selection of healthy options.

Post meeting note: The Head of Community Services will write to SLM asking them to outline what steps they are taking to increase their current offer.

Members asked if the car park at the South Oxhey leisure Centre was too small, given the ongoing issues with off street parking.

The Head of Community Services replied that it was not too small.

Both The Head of Community Services and the service provider confirmed that SLM had put up signs reminding customers of their duty to park safely. The issue has been raised with Regulatory Services and Herts County Council.

A Member commented that there were still a high number of cars parked in the vicinity when the Leisure Centre was closed during the various lockdowns owing to the operation of a nearby car dealership.

RESOLVED:

That the 12 month work plan presented by Sports and Leisure Management is noted.

LEC 13/21**CITIZEN'S ADVICE SERVICE IN THREE RIVERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

The Chief Executive of the Citizen Advice Service provided the attached presentation to the Committee highlighting the performance and achievements for the last financial year 2020/21.

Members asked which area of service had seen the biggest increase of cases.

The Chief Executive stated this was debt and family law.

Members asked if not having accessible toilets at the centre in South Oxhey was a constraint of the property, or financial.

The Chief Executive stated it was down to the building, but something that would be taken forward in due course.

Members asked if Councillors had been invited to the Citizen's Advice Service's AGM, as a number would be keen to attend, including the Chair of the Council.

The Chief Executive said that this had not happened yet as they were wary of numbers, but this would be sent out in due course.

Members asked if the CAS was accessible for those involved in domestic violence.

The Chief Executive said they were still very busy with instances involving family law, and their figures are also echoed by the data received from the police.

RESOLVED:

That Members noted the content of the presentation.

LEC 14/21**BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (PERIOD 3)**

The Finance Manager presented the Committee with the Budget Monitoring Report for period 3.

Members asked where the roles of the Parke Ranger at Leavsdon County Park and the Biodiversity Officer were funded from, and how was the decision to amend the payment terms with SLM agreed with Members.

The Head of Community Services confirmed the Park Ranger role was funded through existing budgets, as was the Biodiversity Officer, and the amendment to the SLM payment scheme was agreed with the Group Leaders via an Urgent Decision in April 2021.

Members queried the capital figures reported in 2.6 of the report.

The Finance Manager said this was due to the phasing of the budget and would likely be seen in the Budget Monitoring report for Quarter 2.

Councillor Alex Michaels departed the meeting at 9.15pm.

Councillor Paula Hiscocks asked for an update on works at the Batchworth Depot. The Head of Community Services confirmed that the unit had been built and work to ease concerns put forward by the Environmental Agency in relation to water levels were being worked through, with the project still on track to be completed in this financial year.

RESOLVED:

That Members note & comment on the contents of the report

LEC 15/21**ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Head of Community Partnerships presented the report and appendices attached to the meeting's agenda.

A Member was proud of the work that had been done to get to this stage, and congratulated the Officers involved.

Members asked why Parish Councils had not been consulted and could reports of Anti-social Behaviour be made via the Three Rivers District Council website that would result in a log number being issued?

The Head of Community Partnerships said the policy was not out for formal consultation but would be happy to share this with Parish Councils, and would pick up the second suggestion as part of the Customer Experience Strategy when Community Partnerships is reviewed.

Members asked what threshold would trigger a case review.

The Head of Community Partnerships said these thresholds are set within legislation set out by central government with more information being found on our website:

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/egcl-page/the-community-trigger-for-anti-social-behaviour>

Councillor Andrew Scarth moved, duly seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd, the recommendations as set out in the report.

On being put to the Committee the recommendations as set out in the report were declared CARRIED by the Chair the voting being 9 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee makes any further comments on the Three Rivers District Council Anti-Social Behaviour Policy 2021 before ratification by Council on 19 October 2021.

LEC 16/21

DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

The Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy Officer presented the report and appendices attached to the meeting's agenda.

Members thanked the Officers for their hard work on this action plan, and said that as Three Rivers District Council is the lead authority for air quality, having this as a separate heading would have been agreeable. Officers noted that it is a joint theme with Sustainable Travel in the Climate Emergency Strategy and the Action Plan flowing from this.

A Member signposted Members to the full air quality report available on the Three Rivers District Council website.

Members asked if a condition could be added that would prevent Thrive Homes selling properties in receipt of grant funding on the open market.

The Officer confirmed that, for the 120 homes put forward by Thrive Homes there were no plans for disposal and that Thrive Homes expect to retain these properties long into the future.

Members asked why only Thrive Home and Watford Community Housing were included in the grant.

The Officer confirmed this was because no other housing associations returned their requests for contact, and the application process had such short timescales and significant complexity that in order to submit the application a supportive housing association was critical for any chance of success. We are keen to work with more Housing Associations where possible.

A Member extended their thanks to Officers and congratulated them on producing the action plan.

Councillor Phil Williams moved, duly seconded by Councillor Raj Khiroya, the recommendations as set out in the report.

On being put to the Committee the Chair declared the policy CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

That the Leisure, Environment and Community Committee agree the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan 2021-2023.

LEC 17/21 WORK PROGRAMME

On review of the Committees work programme it was agreed that the Physical Activity strategy would come to a later committee meeting to ensure that all other business could be heard at the next meeting.

Members asked if an update on the Wildlife Den at the Aquadrome could be provided at the next meeting.

The matter of whether the meeting should start at 7pm was raised.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be agreed with the amendments.

CHAIR