



Service Policy Panel Briefing Paper

Report of: Cultural Services Manager
Date: 20th March 2007
Open

Sports & Leisure Centres – March 2006 to February 2007

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to review the management of the Council's Sports and Leisure Centres.

2. Background

- 2.1 Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre (WFGLC), Stourport Sports Centre (SSC) and Bewdley Leisure Centre (BLC) have been managed by DC Leisure since April 2003.
- 2.2 The partnership agreement is for a period of 10 years and DC Leisure manage this contract through a trading arm of the company, Wyre Forest Leisure Community Association Ltd.
- 2.3 The partnership arrangement has achieved significant revenue savings for the Council.
- 2.4 A working group was set up in 2003 as part of the Overview & Scrutiny exercise and 6 month and annual reviews took place. The working group was extremely satisfied with the way the centres were being managed. In March 2005 it was agreed that the panel would review the Leisure Centres yearly.
- 2.5 Board meetings take place quarterly and the Council is represented by two members (Cllrs Kelly and Ballinger) and two officers.

3. March 2006- February 2007

Staffing Levels

- 3.1 Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre & Stourport Sports Centre's staffing levels have remained the same throughout with the addition of a Part Time Marketing Post for 25 hours per week based at the Wyre Forest Glades to deliver the three leisure sites local and group marketing agenda.

- 3.2 In September 2006 the Wyre Forest Glades Contract Manager appointed a Part Time Site Development Manager Post for Bewdley Leisure Centre for 31 hours per week who reports directly to the Contracts Manager based at Wyre Forest Glades.

Programme Changes

- 3.3 **Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre** review on a three monthly basis their group exercise programme to meet the needs of casual and member users to include new and exciting initiatives. The Sports Hall programme and one off event bookings has been consistent with very few changes due to the popularity with the users.
- 3.4 **Stourport Sports Centre** has made no changes to the varied pool programme layout throughout March 2006-February 2007 and continues to grow its Swim Academy brand for junior swimmers learning to swim and improve their technique to continue through to the Wyre Forest Swimming Club. The Group Exercise programme has seen positive changes to include 'Urban Rebounding' for Juniors and Adults and Seniors along with 'Pilates' and 'Core Ball'.
- 3.5 **Bewdley Leisure Centre** has marketed and seen an increase in children's birthday parties being held at weekends, which includes Go Kart parties catering for 4-9 year olds, along with the standard sports and bouncer parties.

Customer Comments (see Appendix 1)

- 3.6 **Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre**

58 comments received throughout 12 months of March 2005-February 2006

58 comments received throughout 12 months of March 2006-February 2007

It is worth noting that 26 of the total 58 comments were made in the months of January and February following the opening of the new wet side changing facilities 13 of which related specifically to environmental and design issues i.e. fluctuating air, pool and shower temperatures and positioning of hand driers hair driers and lack of coat hooks which are all now resolved.

- 3.7 **Stourport Sports Centre**

49 comments received throughout 12 months of March 2005-February 2006

21 comments received throughout 12 months of March 2006-February 2007

- 3.8 **Bewdley Leisure Centre**

0 comments received throughout 12 months of March 2005-February 2006

3 comments received throughout 12 months of March 2006-February 2007

Usage Figures (see Appendix 2)

- 3.9 **Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre** has seen a decline in usage figures for November – December 2006 due to the joint funded refurbishment of the changing facilities. The centre had cancelled the pool programme relocating wet exercise classes and school swimming lessons to Stourport Sports Centre, however, remained partly open for fitness, sports hall and food and beverage users. January 2007 saw an increase in users due to the re-opening of the leisure pool exceeding previous year's usage.
- 3.10 **Stourport Sports Centre** had also undergone a joint funded project with Wyre Forest District Council for the sports hall floor replacement which show an expected decline in users in August 2006.
- 3.11 **Bewdley Leisure Centre** has seen an increase in users due to the relocation of Stourport trampolining courses and group exercise classes throughout August due to floor refurbishment. Increase from September due to outdoor football bookings and local team fixtures.

4. Refurbishment - WFGLC

- 4.1 The jointly funded refurbishment of the swimming changing facilities has been undertaken in two phases due to unforeseen building difficulties where contractors faced reinforced concrete bases and hollow floors Phase 1 opened in January and proved exceptionally busy. Customer feedback has been extremely positive with only a few minor negative comments, which were received when the pool re-opened before the changing rooms were fully finished.
- 4.2 Stage 2 of the refurbishment is the provision of a health suite and changing facilities which include state of art steam and sauna facilities and will be completed by the end of March.

5. Sports Hall Floor – Stourport Sports Centre

- 5.1 The sports hall floor was replaced in Summer 2006 which was funded jointly by DC Leisure and the Council.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Council's Sports and Leisure Centres are well managed and the partnership agreement has been very successful in achieving both DC Leisure's and the Council's objectives.

7. Background Papers

Nil

Appendix 1 – Customer Comments

Appendix 2 – Usage Figures

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