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WIRKSWORTH LEISURE CENTRE COMMUNITY GROUP

Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 2 February 2016 at Anthony Gell Community School, Wirksworth at 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Mike Ratcliffe - in the Chair

Councillor Joanne Wild, Councillor Steve Maskrey (Wirksworth Town Council), Messrs John Thompson, Malcolm Kelly, and Rod Leach

Dave Turvey (Active Communities Officer) and Christine Laver (Democratic Services Team Leader)

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED That the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Group held on 13 July 2015 be approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Marketing Officer - The Group asked if it would be possible for the District Council's new Marketing Officer to attend future meetings. The Active Communities Officer noted the request but said that the Marketing Officer's remit was wider than simply leisure and the leisure staff who regularly attended these meetings would feed back any suggestions that the Group wished to make. It may be possible for the Marketing Officer to attend in relation to a specific proposal or to give an overview of her work in relation to leisure.

All weather pitch – it was noted that the pitch had been inspected and no further work was required at present.

UPDATE ON THE LEISURE SERVICES AND CENTRES REVIEW

The Active Leisure Officer noted that the Head of Community Services had already provided an update to most of the members of the group on the progress of the Leisure Review and there was little he could add to that.

For the benefit of those Members who had not been updated he noted that Phase 1 of the Review had been concerned with the operation of the leisure centres and sought to provide cost savings and increase income.

At phase 2 FMG Consulting had carried out comparison work between the District Council's Leisure Centres and similar centres in both the public and private sectors. They

had produced the following five options

1. No change
2. Outsource all Leisure centres but retain sports development in house
3. Outsource all Leisure centres and sports development
4. Set up the Leisure Centres as a not for profit organisation
5. Outsource some of the centres whilst retaining others.

Council Members had attended a workshop to consider these options but did not feel that they had been provided with sufficient information. A further workshop was, therefore, planned on 24 February when Members would select their preferred options to be worked up further for consideration by Council.

AGREED

1. That the update be noted.
2. That the District Council be asked to expedite the renewal of the Joint Use Agreement with Anthony Gell School, which had lapsed in 2013, until 2017
3. That it be noted that the Leisure Centre premises contain an element of school property in the form of the Minor Hall

REVISED CHARGES

The Active Leisure Officer reported that there had been a full review of leisure charges and the proposed rates reflected both comparisons with similar public sector and private providers and a rationalisation of the membership packages that had evolved over time. With regard to Wirksworth Leisure Centre all Membership charges had been frozen and the climbing wall had been included in the fitness freedom package, at no extra charge, in the hope that it would bring new customers to the Centre. The new pricing structure also included a monthly pass option for the climbing wall. The cost of using the meeting room had also been reduced.

AGREED

1. That the revised pricing structure be noted and welcomed.
2. That there was a need to publicise the changes to make potential users aware of what was available.

USAGE STATISTICS

A considerable amount of information had been provided on usage of the Centre but it was felt that this needed to be presented in a clearer manner

It was noted that school usage of the gym and climbing wall had fallen. The Headteacher explained that this was attributable to budgetary restrictions and the situation was unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future.

It was also noted that fitness class attendance had fallen. This was attributed to the loss of an instructor, but it was noted that that post had now been filled.

AGREED

1. That the usage statistics be noted.
2. That, for future meetings, consideration be given to presenting the information in a more accessible way, possibly in the form of graphs, that would highlight variations and allow comparison over time.

SPORTS HALL STAFFING AND MAINTENANCE

The lack of a fitness instructor was addressed in the previous item.

Concerns were expressed about poor maintenance of gym equipment that had resulted in some apparatus being out of commission for several weeks.

The Active Leisure Officer noted that an assessment of the exercise bikes was imminent and, following that, a decision would be taken on the necessary repairs. It was planned to tender for a contract, beginning in January 2017, that should result in newer and better maintained equipment being available at Wirksworth.

A survey of the sports hall floor was to be undertaken by the District Council's Estates Department. It was noted that the Foundation Trust may be able to contribute to improvements to the floor.

- AGREED**
1. That the update be noted.
 2. That the staff should be encouraged to promote fitness classes when the new instructor was in post

UPDATE FROM SCHOOL

The Headteacher reported that the PE staff were happy with the relationship between the school and the leisure centre. Some flexibility had been lost when the previous manager left but this had improved over the past six months.

The sports hall floor was a cause for concern.

Mr Kelly reiterated his request for a renewal of the Joint Use Agreement until 2017. He confirmed that usage of the school car park by leisure centre users could continue.

The school was planning to erect some new signage and that could be an opportunity for joint working to also promote the leisure facilities that were available.

Finally, Mr Kelly asked whether the litter bin in the car park could be reinstated as litter had become a problem since its removal. Councillor Wild noted that if the litter was reported to the Clean and Green Team it would be removed.

Meeting closed 7.30pm