

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SCRUTINY
HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON THURSDAY, 24 JULY 2008**

MEMBERS

* Cllr C M Pannell - Chairman

* Cllr K J Baldry - Vice-Chairman

* Cllr J H Baverstock

* Cllr P H Cook

* Cllr G J Fielden

* Cllr R D Gilbert

* Cllr J W Squire

* Cllr J A Westacott

* Denotes attendance

Also in attendance at the invitation of the Chairman:
Cllrs H D Bastone, B E Carson, P W Hitchins, M J Howarth, D M O'Callaghan
and M F Saltern.

Also in attendance but not participating:
Cllrs J I G Blackler, P Coulson, T J Hewitt and M Stone.

Officers in attendance:

For all items: Member Support Services Manager;
Item 7 (minute SC.9/08 below refers): Head of Landscape and Leisure, Leisure and
Recreation Officer, Teresa England (Tone Leisure, Operations Director) and Rob
Warner (Tone Leisure, Finance Director)

SC.7/08 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Scrutiny, held on 24 April 2008, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SC.8/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. These were recorded as follows:

Cllr P H Cook declared a personal interest in item 7: 'Monitoring Report – Leisure Centres, Sport and Healthy Lifestyle Contract' (minute SC.9/08 below refers), by virtue of her being a member of Quayside Leisure Centre and remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and vote thereon.

Cllr R D Gilbert declared a personal interest in item 7: 'Monitoring Report – Leisure Centres, Sport and Healthy Lifestyle Contract' (minute SC.9/08 below refers), by virtue of his wife's employment with Tone Leisure but remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and vote thereon. However, Cllr Gilbert left the meeting when the discussion focused on the financial implications of GP Health referrals due to his wife's close involvement with this aspect of leisure work.

SC.9/08

MONITORING REPORT – LEISURE CENTRES, SPORT AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CONTRACT

Members considered a report which highlighted the overall performance and current key issues of the leisure centre management arrangements with Tone Leisure. The report concluded by noting that a successful first full complete financial year of the Tone Leisure contract had been achieved against the three key performance indicators, and successful delivery of outreach healthy lifestyle programmes. The second year would, however, create new challenges which would need to be addressed in order that the financial and operational performance targets could be met.

During discussion, particular reference was made to:-

- a) the high levels of long-term sickness. Following a query, it was noted that long-term sickness issues were being addressed with the involvement of Occupational Health. Furthermore, during discussion on staffing issues, officers advised that the Human Resources Manager was not solely dedicated the South Hams' Leisure Centres. However, Human Resource staffing levels had been increased to support the South Hams leisure centres;
- b) concern over the net cost of catering. Members were advised that it had been a challenge to decrease the rate of financial losses in relation to the catering aspect of the contract. Changes had been implemented in an attempt to return a surplus;
- c) promoting and developing physical activities in rural communities. Members advised on the importance of developing this scheme and questioned why it had been delayed. In response, it was noted that the initiative had been delayed due to the GP referrals scheme, which had been rolled out during the previous year with a higher priority emphasis placed upon it. However, a survey of village halls had been carried out, the results of which were being analysed, and it was anticipated that a plan would be developed in the forthcoming months for implementation. Members wished for an update on the schemes development to be presented by Tone at its next scheduled meeting;
- d) Totnes Pavilion and its company board TADPOOL. In response to a query relating to the relationship between Tone and TADPOOL, Members were advised that, although there were differences of opinion at times, it was felt that the relationship had improved. Members agreed to invite TADPOOL to a future meeting of Scrutiny;
- e) the Leisure Youth nights, particularly in Kingsbridge. A Member noted that attendance figures for the youth leisure nights in Kingsbridge were significantly lower in comparison to the other three major towns in South Hams. In response, officers advised that this was of concern and ways of promoting the scheme were being

addressed. A local Ward Member for Kingsbridge also noted that the town council was proactive in promoting youth schemes and therefore it might be beneficial for Tone to enter into discussions with the town council to find a more joined up approach;

- f) marketing of the leisure centres. A non-Scrutiny Group Member queried what marketing / promotional opportunities Tone Leisure utilised, especially in relation to the media press. It was noted that the question had arisen following concern over the apparent lack of positive press releases regarding Tone Leisure in local newspapers. In response, Tone advised that they would report this concern back to relevant officers;
- g) the name of South Dartmoor Leisure Centre. Members strongly expressed the belief that the leisure centre should be re-branded as Ivybridge Leisure Centre and wished for officers to pursue this issue as a high priority;
- h) customer feedback. A Member highlighted the importance of the Group receiving detailed customer feedback and requested such information be presented to the Group at a future meeting;
- i) increasing the number of visitors to the centres. A Member suggested opening discussions with transport providers to ascertain whether there was room for a shared service for transport to and from the leisure centres;
- j) concern of any impact the current 'credit crunch' may have on the leisure centres trading accounts. Officers advised that this was being monitored;
- k) the process for reminding members of the leisure centres to renew their membership. Following a query, Members were advised that due to the majority of memberships being paid for on a monthly direct debit basis, there was felt to be no requirement to send out reminders;
- l) review of the Tone Leisure (South Hams) Limited Board Structure. Although the Board was not at full capacity, it was felt to be functioning very well;
- m) Health Walks. A Member highlighted the importance of this programme and wished to extend his congratulations to the officers and volunteers involved. Officers advised on the difficulties in obtaining funding for the programme and therefore Members wished it to be formally noted that Health Walks be considered a top priority by the Council and that funding should be allocated accordingly;
- n) the importance of establishing and programming schemes for 5 – 7 year olds at the leisure centre.

RESOLVED

- i. That the report be noted;
- ii. That TADPOOL be invited to attend the 16 October 2008 meeting and Tone therefore be deferred to the meeting of 20 November 2008;
- iii. That the Group strongly wishes for the name of South Dartmoor Leisure Centre to be re-titled to 'Ivybridge Leisure Centre' forthwith;
- iv. That a paper be produced which provides Scrutiny with information relating to customer feedback for consideration at the November 2008 meeting;
- v. That Health Walks are considered to be a top priority to the Council and funding be allocated accordingly;
- vi. That clarity and definition be given to the matter of outreach services in Tone Leisure's November 2008 report.

SC.10/08 SCRUTINY SHADOWING ROLES

Members confirmed that they were kept fully briefed by their Executive counterparts, and continued to meet frequently. A Member wished to extend his congratulations to the Forward Planning Team and the Development Control Service for the work undertaken on the Development Planning Documents, with the authority being listed as third best nation wide and therefore earning a delivery grant of over £1,000,000, which had been capped at this sum.

SC.11/08 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OF SCRUTINY

a) Standards Board for England

The Group agreed that the Standards Board for England item should be removed from the future agenda items due to Standards investigations now being undertaken at a local level. Therefore, the Group requested a report which reviewed the Council's procedures for such hearings from the Council's Monitoring Officer. It was agreed that this item would be considered at 20 November 2008 meeting

b) TADPOOL

The Group requested that a representative of TADPOOL be invited to attend the meeting scheduled for 16 October 2008 to discuss issues at Totnes Pavilion.

c) **Tone Leisure**

The Group agreed that Tone Leisure attend the meeting of 20 November 2008.

d) **Digital Switchover**

The Group agreed that the Digital Switchover item should be removed from the future agenda items.

e) **First and Stage Coach**

Members requested that a representative from both First and Stage Coach be invited to attend a future meeting of the Group to discuss public transport concerns in rural areas.

f) **Victim Support**

Members requested that Victim Support be invited to a future Informal Council meeting to present to Members its role in the community.

(Meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.50 am).

Chairman