

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUSINESS BOARD (LEISURE, CAR PARKS AND MARKETS) HELD AT SOUTH DARTMOOR LEISURE CENTRE, LEONARDS ROAD, IVYBRIDGE ON WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2007

MEMBERS

* Cllr P W Hitchins - Chairman

* Cllr P H Cook - Vice-Chairman

* Cllr B C Evans

ø Cllr G H W Rosevear

* Cllr M C Ramsay

* Denotes attendance

ø Denotes apology for absence

Also in attendance at the invitation of the Chairman:
Cllr D W May

Officers in attendance:

All Agenda Items: Managing Director of Tone Leisure (South Hams) Ltd, Head of Landscape and Leisure and Leisure and Recreation Officer;
Item 5 (Minute BBL.15/06 below refers): Head of Business Development.

BBL.12/06 WELCOME

The Chairman wished to welcome Juliette Dickinson, Managing Director of Tone Leisure (South Hams) Ltd, to her first Board meeting since the successful transfer of the Council's leisure centres.

BBL.13/06 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Business Board (Leisure, Car Parks and Markets) held on 28 November 2006 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BBL.14/06 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 5: 'Monitoring Reports' (BBL.15/06 below refers) by virtue of her spouse's use of the boat winter storage facilities and remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and vote thereon;

Cllr P H Cook also declared a personal interest in Item 6: 'Monitoring Report (Leisure Centres, Sport and Healthy Lifestyle Contract)' (BBL.16/06 below refers) by virtue of her being a member of the 'GO Leisure' scheme and remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and vote thereon.

BBL.15/06 **MONITORING REPORTS**

A report was considered which set out the performance of the Car Parks and Pannier Markets for the 9-month period from April to December 2006.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) Whilst the total net income for the 3-month period between September and December 2006 had been approximately £130,000 below the target net income for this period, the overall total net income for car and boat parking was still approximately £172,000 above the target net income for the 9-month period between April and December 2006. The Board was also advised that income in town centre car parks had reduced and could be in part attributed to the popularity of the Concessionary Bus Fares Scheme. Officers informed the Board that research was currently being undertaken into the impact of the Concessionary Bus Fares Scheme on income, with comparative trend analysis being undertaken with neighbouring authorities;
- (b) The Board wished to express its support for the current Council policy whereby standard charge notices be cancelled, subject to the payment of a £5 administration fee, in instances where tickets or permits had been purchased but not displayed correctly;
- (c) With regard to the initiatives introduced to improve the security of the pay and display vending machines, officers confirmed that the reinforced fronts to the machines had to date proven to be successful in countering vandalism;
- (d) In response to a question, officers advised that progress was being made with regard to the development and reliability of pay and display machines which could accept the use of credit and debit cards. The Board was informed that officers intended to report back the findings of research undertaken on card machines at the next Board meeting;
- (e) It was noted that the income for pannier markets had noticeably decreased between September and December 2006. A Member questioned whether this trend could be attributed to the growth in popularity of internet auction sites. Members requested that income trends be closely monitored and a breakdown on income for each pannier market be presented to the next Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Business Board **RECOMMENDS** to the Executive that:-

The Business Board has examined the overall performance of the Leisure Centres and Car Parks and Pannier Markets and has found them to be satisfactory subject to any comments as detailed above.

BBL.16/06 MONITORING REPORT (LEISURE CENTRES, SPORT AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES CONTRACT)

The Board considered a report which summarised the contract monitoring arrangements and details regarding the developing partnership with Tone Leisure. The report presented an interim update due to the contract with Tone Leisure (South Hams) Ltd only having started on 1 December 2007 and as a consequence, information on the first quarter performance not yet being available.

The report concluded that the first months of the contract service delivery had taken place during the run-up to and over the Christmas period, which was traditionally a relatively quiet time. However, Tone had been able to use this period to deliver investments at both Quayside and South Dartmoor Leisure Centres to fitness and gym facilities. Furthermore, new fitness programmes, pricing structures and considerable staff training and support had been introduced. Members were requested to note the contract monitoring arrangements and to comment upon the progress to date.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

(a) In order to ensure performance monitoring, the Board was informed that representatives from Tone Leisure were currently working on the production of a 3-year service plan, which would include a financial outline. The Board endorsed the officer suggestion that future monitoring reports be focused upon the following areas of strategic service development:

- Financial Overview and Performance;
- Systems and Quality;
- Customers and People; and
- Innovation and Improvements;

- (b) The Board noted that Tone Leisure was satisfied with membership sales to date and it was hoped that membership numbers would further increase, once there was greater awareness amongst residents of the investments made to improve facilities. However, the Board was advised that comparisons between previous years' sales in the leisure centres would be problematic due to the newly adopted pricing strategy. In addition, a good relationship had already been established with Tadpool and early indications suggested that it had also seen its membership numbers increase;
- (c) With regard to staffing, Members were informed that staff morale had improved since the leisure transfer and it was already apparent to Tone Leisure that there were a number of talented members of staff employed at the leisure centres. The transition had been felt by staff to be smooth and the increased amount of training and internal promotion opportunities available had been welcomed and embraced. This view had been supported by positive feedback gained from both Staff Forum and Union representatives;
- (d) A Member questioned whether there were proposals to consider the signage and naming of South Dartmoor Leisure Centre (SDLC). In response, it was noted that Tone Leisure would support such proposals to rename and improve the signage at SDLC but at this stage, it was not considered to be a top priority compared to service delivery improvements;
- (e) The Board was informed that a draft outreach development plan had been produced and increased onus had begun to be placed upon community outreach work with a number of programmes now in place (e.g. health walks);
- (f) Officers referred to the success of the Youth Leisure Nights and the close partnership with the youth service and towns, which had a positive impact in reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour;
- (g) Members were informed that there was considered to be a gap in the South Hams for leisure services for 5-8 year olds and as a consequence, funding was being applied for to launch 'Giant Holiday Camps'. Officers felt that there was an opportunity to work together in partnership with local schools to develop the availability of children's after school and holiday activities;

- (h) Members were reminded that a board of trustees had been established, which comprised of 6 local residents who lived across the South Hams. It was intended that this board would be responsible for setting the business direction for Tone Leisure. Members welcomed the comment that any generated surpluses would be reinvested locally and requested that a trustee be invited to attend a future Business Board meeting.

In conclusion, the Board wished to state its satisfaction with the progress and evident improvements made to date by Tone Leisure, since the completion of the leisure transfer.

RECOMMENDED

That the Business Board **RECOMMENDS** to the Executive that:-

1. The Board has considered and commented upon the contract monitoring arrangements in place with Tone Leisure (South Hams) Ltd;
2. The Board welcomes the fitness gym investments and find the first months of the contract to have been delivered satisfactorily, subject to any specific Member comments as detailed above;
3. The Board wish to congratulate Tone Leisure (South Hams) Ltd on the transition and partnership arrangements which have already been put in place.

(Meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.15 pm).

Chairman