

TITLE: The Hive: Progress Report

Committee: Community Services Committee

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[T183]

1. ISSUE

- 1.1. To report on the progress of the new leisure centre (the Hive).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The Hive has now been operating for a little over six months. The purpose of this report is to report on the progress of the centre, and to identify any issues emerging.

4. ARGUMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. GLL report that monthly visits have steadily increased from just under 21,000 in September to just over 24,000 in November. The growth is about evenly split between pool and sports usage, with fitness attendances stable. The most obvious single change in usage is for the outdoor pitch, which is now well-used by local junior clubs in particular. The balance between junior and adult use is fairly constant at 65:35. Of the member-base (which includes swimming lesson clients), about 12% have some form of concessionary membership, which suggests that this is being well taken up.
- 4.2. After review, the sports hall prices are being revised from January, to come closer in line with other local facilities – although comparisons need to be treated with caution, due to the different structures. Other prices are unaffected. The effect is that the cost of a 40-minute badminton booking on a midweek evening will range from £8.00 for a one-off adult booking, down to £2.40 for a junior concessionary card-holder. Swimming prices – for comparison - range similarly from £4.50 down to £1.50. Further reductions for juniors apply for specified times and sessions, with a number of junior activities priced at £1.00 per person in order to attract new participants.
- 4.3. This is part of a wider development in the sports activities programme, which connects to the ECDC Sport & Physical Activity Strategy. The

Centre is developing positive partnerships with a few key sports clubs to ensure a continuation of opportunities from introductory to competitive level; a new Exercise Referral Coordinator commences in January; and officers are working with the Centre to capture the potential synergies with the Let's Get Moving programme and build schools' use, for example. These developments are key to attracting users from across the community, and not just existing regular participants.

- 4.4. Operationally, there have been periodic complaints about customer service and facilities management; but they are not currently such as to suggest consistent issues. The cleaning regime has been strengthened, with a dedicated member of staff on site every evening. Revisions to the holiday teaching pool programme for the October half-term helped to mitigate any conflicts between lessons and general family use. We will have to see how this works next summer, when casual visits will tend to be at their highest.
- 4.5. The working relationship between ECDC and GLL remains very good, and officers are in regular contact with the GLL management team both with a view to optimising the long-term outcomes from the contract, and to help manage any immediate issues arising. Further reports will be provided on a regular basis to fit with Committee schedules.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. There are no new financial commitments arising from this report.
- 5.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out for the leisure centre project in November 2016. No new considerations have emerged at this stage.

Background documents

None

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