

Report to: LED Monitoring Forum
Subject: LED Community support to Afghan Refugees
From: Jamie Bryant, Director of Delivery
Date: 10th November 2021

The below report sets out a summary of the activities undertaken by LED to support the sports and leisure provision of a number of Afghan families currently residing in Exmouth following repatriation from Afghanistan. LED felt privileged to be able to support this initiative.

- LED have worked in partnership with Devon County Council officers having been invited by EDDC Cllrs to provide a range of indoor sport and leisure opportunities for the Afghan families currently residing in temporary accommodation in Exmouth, to help them settle in the UK and also to provide opportunities for physical activities they may never have experienced and help improve both their physical and mental health.
- There were 67 family members residing in temporary accommodation, both adults and children in family groups.
- LED allocated a senior manager (Leanne Perkins) as the project lead for the initiative, who engaged with Oenone Thomas from Devon County Council to understand the requirements, such that she could then liaise with all LED facilities in Exmouth to ensure that the appropriate activities and facilities could be made available at no cost to the families, at times to suit the families.
- Following a review of available space and activities available a programme was developed, creating opportunities for the families to take part in the following activities, with all the necessary equipment provided (and some instances some coaches on hand to support): -

Exmouth Leisure Centre – 10 hours per week minimum

- Squash
- Badminton
- Swimming
- Tennis

Exmouth Tennis Centre – 5 hours per week minimum

These are coach-led sessions for beginners

Ocean, Exmouth

Soft Play – all day, every day

Bowling – all day, every day

Exmouth Pavilion

The local manager has offered to put on a film night or provide some free tickets to events

- Leanne worked with Oenone to gather the required information to create and issue the temporary memberships that the families would need to access the sites, giving consideration to some of the cultural differences that may be experienced by some family members.
- LED IT team set up temporary free of charge membership options, linked to the membership cards so that usage could be tracked and the appropriate customer information was safely stored.
- The local centre teams were briefed and trained around potential language barriers and cultural understanding to ensure the families experiences were the best they could be.

- Offers of support from team members (and a local councillor who is a regular user of the centre) to assist with some of the activities came through.
- The scheme went live on the 1st November, providing fully free of charge access to services and facilities for all 67 refugees.
- At the time of writing sadly take up has (so far) been low. When Oenone returns from leave on 12th November, Leanne will be contacting her to discuss how LED can support and further encourage these families to access and enjoy LED facilities whilst they are in Exmouth.