

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of LED Monitoring Forum held at Online via zoom app on 12 April 2022

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.23 pm

116 Public Speaking

One member of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

Mr Mike Goodman commented that it was disappointing that this was the first time a resident had spoken at a meeting of the LED Monitoring Forum, and he hoped his contribution would add value to the leisure debate. In his statement, Mr Goodman raised a number of points and questions:

- Had the Forum discussed the social value aspect of LED Community Leisure in Devon, estimated projections of which were set out in LED's published accounts in March 2021, and the key role of leisure provision in public health?
- Could the Forum confirm that the Leisure Strategy, once completed, would include a detailed equalities report?
- Would the new Leisure Strategy be completed by May 2022, and would it be taken to full Council?
- Would the excellent facility at Exmouth Pavilion continue to be maintained, as part of the new Leisure Strategy, given that it is costly to EDDC?
- A document is published showing high-level Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for LED; i) is the Forum informed of a more comprehensive list of KPIs?; ii) can these be made public?; iii) what benchmarking was used with other authorities when completing the KPIs?; and iv) will the KPIs be changed after the Leisure Strategy is adopted?
- Could the Forum confirm that detailed or abridged LED management accounts are discussed, albeit not in open forum?
- Once agreed, would the Leisure Strategy form the basis for any negotiations concerning the LED Community Leisure contract?
- These were challenging times for the leisure industry; Mr Goodman suggested a plan is put in place to drive down operating costs and increase revenue in order that LED becomes less reliant on EDDC in the future, in making up financial shortfalls.

In responding to Mr Goodman, the following points were made:

- Whilst members of the public had not registered to speak at previous meetings of this Forum, 845 people had responded to the public consultation for the Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy, which was a good number for a local council.
- The LED Social Value report was discussed at length at a previous meeting of the Forum (minutes of the 14 September 2021 meeting refer).
- A draft Leisure Strategy is expected from Strategic Leisure in May 2022, including advice on inclusivity, access and equalities considerations.
- The Exmouth Pavilion will form part of the Leisure Strategy and/or the updated Culture Strategy; until these documents are completed, it is not possible to state whether EDDC can maintain the facility without extra cost.
- The LED KPI report sets out trends concerning LED activities. Once completed, the Leisure Strategy will identify outcomes that can be translated into meaningful KPIs but without the strategy, any KPIs the Council could ask for would be somewhat arbitrary.
- Detailed LED management accounts are received by the Forum and form part of the discussion around subsidies; due to commercial sensitivities, these accounts are discussed in private session. It was noted that, as a registered society under the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, LED's accounts are available through the Financial Conduct Authority Mutuals Public Register.

- EDDC has an excellent record of providing leisure facilities, particularly throughout the pandemic at a cost to EDDC of £1.9 million, and without any financial support from central government, demonstrating the competence of officers and willingness of members to continue to provide leisure facilities in the district.

The Chair thanked Mr Goodman for his contribution to the meeting.

117 **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 March 2022**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 March 2022 were noted as a true and accurate record.

118 **Declarations of interest**

Cllr P Millar: Minutes 121 – 125; Personal Interest: Member of LED Community Leisure.
Cllr A Dent: Minutes 121 – 125; Personal Interest: Member of LED Community Leisure.
Cllr G Jung: Minutes 121 – 125; Personal Interest: Family members are members of LED Community Leisure.
Cllr P Arnott: Minute 124; Personal Interest: Represents the Coly Valley ward.

119 **Matters of urgency**

There as one matter of urgency (minute 124 refers).

120 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There was one item to be considered in private session (minute 125 refers).

121 **LED Facilities and Activities report March 2022**

A report from the LED Director of Delivery had been circulated in advance, providing an update on the activities of LED Community Leisure including community work, health and fitness, facilities, projects, marketing and communications, and a summary of customer feedback.

The LED Director of Delivery provided a brief verbal summary of the content of the report and invited comment.

Discussion of the report included the following points:

- The work to upgrade the Sidmouth swimming pool changing rooms has included refreshing the existing disabled changing facilities as well as creating some larger changing spaces, designated as family changing areas, but suitable for use by people with carers.
- Given the continued prevalence of Covid in East Devon and the impact on the NHS locally, concern was raised about the removal of Covid-security measures (e.g. screens, face coverings) at LED sites, and the bottleneck of customers around reception areas. It was suggested that LED might like to further review what it can do to help members feel safe within LED facilities.
- It was encouraging to see linkages throughout the report between LED's outreach work and the public health and NHS agendas.

The report was noted and the Chair thanked the LED Director of Delivery for his contribution.

122 **LED Outreach Report March 2022**

The LED Community Engagement Officer ran through the content of the LED Outreach report, detailing the links being developed in the community and the building of long-term partnerships to support the NHS Long Term Health Plan and delivery of the EDDC Public Health Strategy.

Examples of community engagement and outreach work included:

- A Littleham Health and Wellbeing Fair was planned for May, to promote community activities, at a lower cost, in an area of social deprivation.
- Working with disengaged students at Exmouth Community College who shy away from sport and PE lessons.
- Opening up space for coaches and community physiotherapists to deliver classes and engage with clients.

Discussion of the report included the following points:

- There was no reference to Cranbrook in the report; the LED Community Engagement Officer confirmed that she had been trying for some time to secure a meeting with the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot and this had taken place last week. She expressed confidence that there was value to add in Cranbrook, going forward.
- A Member expressed that the Littleham Health and Wellbeing Fair was an important and valuable piece of work, and very positive for the area.

The Forum noted the report and the Chair thanked the LED Community Engagement Officer for her contribution.

123 **LED Dashboard February 2022**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for February 2022, including an outline of the net promoter score.

124 **Colyton Leisure Centre and All Weather Pitch**

A report prepared by the Service Lead – Place, Asset & Commercialisation had been circulated in advance, providing an update on the current discussions with Colyton Grammar School (CGS) regarding the realignment of the terms of the existing Management Agreement and Lease agreements, alongside CGS proposals to install a new all-weather pitch (AWP) and associated floodlights.

The report set out the following points, following a recent meeting with CGS:

- It had been agreed in principle that the Management Agreement for the Sports Centre should be altered to reflect the changes in Sports Hall usage by both parties over the last decade, so that the split of costs is altered from EDDC paying 60% of costs and CGS 40%, to EDDC paying just 40% and CGS 60%.
- As part of the discussions, CGS had raised the need to replace the AWP and floodlights at an estimated cost in the region of £360k. CGS are currently fundraising to meet this capital cost but asked whether EDDC would contribute 40%, equating to approximately £144k. Use of the AWP would then be incorporated in a new lease document securing its long-term future for the general public.
- The proposals were currently out to tender and a contractor would be appointed, with a view to starting work during the summer holidays.

Within the report the Forum was asked to consider the following recommendations:

- A business case is prepared whereby EDDC make a 40% contribution to the AWP and floodlights which is considered in advance of the overall Leisure Strategy review outcomes of shared LED sites.
- That the Forum support a report direct to Cabinet to consider the contribution to the AWP and floodlights once a fuller business case is developed. If supported, this will then require an onward recommendation to Council for budget.
- Discussions continue alongside the production of this report which ensure the necessary changes to the Management Agreement and Lease are captured in revised Heads of Terms and updated documents.

In the absence of the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation, the LED CEO verbally outlined the context to the recommendations the Forum was being asked to consider. It was noted that:

- If the pitch and floodlights are not repaired this summer, there is a risk that that use of the pitch could be lost over the winter, which would in turn affect the revenue that LED receives from the pitch, equating to approximately £20k per year.
- The Leisure Strategy will inform members about the importance of the pitch at CGS relative to other pitches in the area; an outline draft of the Strategy is expected in May but the final version will not be available until June/July 2022.

In discussion of the report, the following points were made:

- It had been apparent for some five years that the life cycle of the pitch was coming to an end.
- It was reported anecdotally that the AWP at CGS was very well used by local young people and adults. If the pitch was lost for a year, it would have a serious impact on these users and local sports teams.
- It was noted that the AWP gets intense use as a school playground and it was not known whether pupils and students were asked to wear appropriate footwear to avoid damaging the surface.
- If the AWP is not replaced during the summer holidays 2022, there is unlikely to be another appropriate time for the work to be undertaken before the summer 2023, due to the time it takes to complete the work, and the availability of contractors,
- There was some work for the Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation to do in ascertaining the cost and benefit of replacing the AWP this summer and how long it would take for the benefit to work through as a financial return on investment.
- Views were expressed that it would be appropriate to consider the proposal as part of the budget setting process for next year, by which time the Leisure Strategy would be in place and members could make an informed decision.

In a vote following the discussion, the Forum agreed the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDED TO Cabinet and Council:

1. To wait for the Leisure Strategy before the proposals for Colyton Leisure Centre and All Weather Pitch are considered again at LED Monitoring Forum.
2. To ask Colyton Grammar School whether, during the break time, pupils could be using more appropriate footwear for the All Weather Pitch, to help prolong its life.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution to the discussion.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank LED Director of Finance, Bridgette Jones, for her contribution to the Forum, since this was Bridgette's last meeting.

The meeting then went into private session.

An LED Group Budget Summary for April 2022 – March 2023 had been circulated in advance together with explanatory notes prepared by the LED CEO.

The LED CEO ran through the report, highlighting what was going particularly well, as well as the challenges that were expected in the context of the rising costs of living and the ongoing impact from Covid, and how these would be mitigated.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Forum would receive ongoing updates in the format of this Group Budget Summary report, on a quarterly basis, together with updates on utility bills as was agreed at the previous meeting.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

- P Arnott
- A Dent
- B De Saram
- S Hawkins (Chair)
- N Hookway
- G Jung
- P Millar (Vice-Chair)
- J Rowland

LED Community Leisure representatives:

- Lottie Edwards, LED Community Engagement Manager
- Peter Gilpin, CEO
- Bridgette Jones, Director of Finance
- Jamie Bryant, Director of Delivery
- Richard Purchase, Chairman of LED Board

Officers in attendance:

- Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
- Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
- John Golding, Strategic Lead Housing, Health and Environment
- Simon Davey, Strategic Lead Finance

Councillor apologies:

- J Loudoun

Chair

Date: