

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held at Online via Zoom app on 14 January 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.19 pm

18 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 November 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 November 2024 were noted as a true and accurate record.

19 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20 Public Speaking

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

21 Matters of urgency

There were three matters of urgency (minutes 25-27 refer).

22 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There was one confidential/exempt item (minute 27 refers).

23 LED Facilities and Activities report November - December 2024

The LED Director of Delivery introduced this report which provided an update on the activities of LED including operational delivery, customer engagement, facilities projects, health and safety, and community projects.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members thanked the LED Director of Delivery for the very good report and commented positively on the range of activities and LED's strong work in deepening community engagement around health and mental wellbeing.
- An ongoing issue had been identified with parking at Honiton Leisure Centre particularly when matches were taking place on the adjacent pitches. LED staff had observed inconsiderate and dangerous parking and there had been increased cancellations as well as complaints from users of the Leisure Centre who were unable to park and were therefore missing sessions which they had paid for. The Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation responded that he and the leadership team had been aware of the issues and following discussion, had decided in summer 2024 that it was not appropriate to intervene by introducing charging and parking enforcement; however, due to evidence recently provided by LED, the matter would be reviewed again in the coming weeks, to consider how the issues can be addressed.
- One Member had been approached by users of Exmouth Leisure Centre who were unhappy that the men's changing facilities for the swimming pool had been closed or unavailable for use. The LED Director of Delivery stated that he would look into the

reasons for this and respond outside of the meeting but the fact that he was unaware, would indicate that any closure had been very temporary.

- A Member asked about the nature and success of a project at Cranbrook Education Campus led by LED. The LED Director of Delivery would enquire with the relevant team and provide a response outside of the meeting.
- In response to a Member's question, Cllr Fernley stated that she was aware that yoga sessions provided free in Cranbrook had been popular and were well attended. It was her understanding that the funding was for a 12-month fixed term and no contingency was currently in place for when the funding expired.
- Responding to a question about health referrals, The LED Director of Delivery stated that where they were not funded by the referring body, access to sessions and facilities was offered at a reduced rate to make them accessible and break down barriers. The onus was then on LED to make the experience a positive one with encouraging results, such that referred individuals felt confident to engage and might consider enrolling with LED as a full member.
- A Member raised concern that some sessions which LED members had been accessing had been replaced with HYROX sessions not included in the cost of their membership meaning that, in effect, affected members were being asked to pay twice. The LED Director of Delivery stated that LED had responded to an identified demand for HYROX and had hoped that it would encourage additional people to engage and join the facility, but there was a cost to becoming HYROX affiliated. He would explore with the relevant team the impact on existing LED members, and report back.

24 **LED KPI Dashboard November 2024**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for November 2024.

25 **Leisure Strategy Action Plan Update**

The Senior Leisure Officer introduced this report which provided the latest update on the Leisure Strategy Action Plan.

The report highlighted that many of the actions identified within the Action Plan had been completed or were in progress. Some of the timescales required adjustment due to the strategic review of leisure service delivery currently taking place, this being a more detailed piece of work than originally intended when the Action Plan was written in 2022.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members were pleased that the Senior Leisure Officer was now in post to progress the actions set out in the Plan, noting that the Council had not had a dedicated resource for leisure for a considerable number of years.
- The Chair asked for a specific update report to the next Forum meeting covering progress with the Cranbrook Leisure Centre proposals.
- The Chair asked that timescales in the Action Plan were updated in order that Officers and Members could see where there were actions which were at risk of not being completed by 2027.
- Members asked to be updated after discussions had taken place regarding the future of Wellbeing Exeter post-April 2025, since it was understood the people involved would no longer be in post after the end of March.

26 **Playing Pitch Audit and Strategy Update**

The Senior Leisure Officer introduced this report which provided an outline of the Playing Pitch Audit (PPA) currently taking place led by leisure consultants, Strategic Leisure.

The PPA would underpin an updated Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). The report also included the vision and objectives that would be recommended within the proposed PPS from 2025.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The evidence from the Audit should be available by the end of March 2025 and would inform the later stages of the consultation on the Local Plan.
- Officers were asked to review the equalities impact of the Strategy to ensure that careful consideration was given to groups which it might disproportionately impact.
- Members commented on the difficulty around managing demand, expectation, cost, and the requirements of the Local Plan, as well as the demands of central government around house building targets. Members were committed, however, to ensuring that playing pitches were delivered for towns in the long term.

The meeting then went into private session.

27 **Review of Leisure Provision - Funding and Management Agreement with LED Community Leisure**

The Assistant Director – Place, Assets and Commercialisation introduced this report which provided an update on progress made against project milestones.

Members discussed the report and relevant considerations, at length.

The Forum:

1. noted the progress that had been made against the project milestones; and
1. asked officers to take advice concerning the issues which had been discussed and report back to the next Forum meeting.

Attendance List **Councillors present:**

P Arnott
K Bloxham
M Goodman
S Hawkins (Chair)
P Hayward
N Hookway
J Loudoun
S Smith
A Teye

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

C Brown
R Collins
P Fernley
R Jefferies
G Jung
M Rixson

Officers in attendance:

Mike O'Mahony, Senior Leisure Officer
Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation

Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Wood, Director of Place
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer

LED Leisure representatives in attendance:

Olly Swayne, LED CEO
Richard Purchase, Chair of LED Board
Matt Wright, LED Director of Delivery

Chair

Date: