



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

BURNLEY TOWN HALL

Wednesday, 9th March, 2022 at 6.30 pm

PRESENT

MEMBERS

Councillors H Baker (Chair), G Birtwistle, C Briggs, S Chaudhary, S Cunliffe, D Ferrier, A Hosker, M Ishtiaq, A Khan, S Lone and C Towneley

OFFICERS

Gerard Vinton	– Chief Executive, Burnley Leisure
Richard Brown	– Community Safety Officer
Alison McEwan	– Democracy Officer

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr A Anwar – Leader of the Council

99. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Hurt, L Khan and Royle.

100. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

101. Notice of Key Decisions and Private Meetings

Members were informed that the latest iteration of the NKDPM had been published and members should notify the Chair if they considered any of the items should be brought to the Committee.

102. Community Safety Annual Report

Richard Brown introduced the report which was noted by Members.

103. Leisure Trust Annual Report

Gerard Vinton gave a presentation to members based on the Leisure Trust Annual Report. The presentation highlighted the particular challenges the Trust had faced, and the work done to ensure the Trust was recovering, and working to build a sustainable future.

Members raised the following:

- Did the Trust have a resilience strategy, which would help if similar circumstances were to arise in future? There were ongoing partnership meetings with the Council to develop resilience for example, looking at Reserves.
- The report mentions ongoing concerns – what are your thoughts on this? On the whole it's a very positive situation. Customers are coming back to use the facilities, memberships are at their highest levels to date. Costs are increasing, but the Trust is looking at how best they can contribute and manage these rises.
- Is there any co-operation with other 'gym' brands? Brands tend to find their own space in the market. Burnley Leisure looks to the middle ground, with good facilities and plenty of classes but mid-priced whereas there are brands with better facilities at a higher price point as well as budget gyms, with less in terms of facility and class offer at a cheaper price.
- Could partnership working support the recovery? Yes and over the past two years there had been significant developments in partnership working – BFCiTC, Calico, other Leisure Trusts. Part of the work involved looking at where there were gaps in provision both within Burnley and elsewhere that the Trust could fill. Also working to deliver programmes which brought in funding such as health based activities.
- Seems to be a lack of hospitality venues. Trust has increased hospitality offer, although currently looking at how to attract sufficient staff to expand further – investigating opportunities to offer catering and hospitality apprenticeships which would support the Trust and benefit local people. The increased hospitality is one of the ways that the £ per seat subsidy required by the Mechanics Theatre.
- Was there a flexi-membership where people could pick & choose which elements of the leisure facilities to include? There is an option for a swim only membership or a whole facility membership. There is a 'pay and play' facility though to enable less frequent usage.
- Leisure Trust offer in Padiham could be improved – The Leisure Centre is the main asset in Padiham, but the Trust also delivers the Active Streets and HAF programme at sites in the town. Work is ongoing to source funding for further provision, and to improve facilities such as the football pitches.
- Issues around Prairie Driving Range – floodlights not going off at night, balls going over netting and into gardens. The lights are supposed to go off at 10pm when the driving range closes. This will be investigated. With regards to escaping balls, the Trust is looking at the possibility of increasing netting height where needed. There is also a 3 strikes policy where 'user error' is causing the balls to go over the netting. After this people are banned from the facility. Staff can check CCTV to see the circumstances surrounding incidents.
- There is an opportunity to increase hire of facilities by providing either halal catering or by allowing outside caterers to use facilities. Previously hadn't been an option due to the catering partnership in operation. This had changed and the Trust would look at how this could be achieved going forwards.

Members thanked Gerard for the presentation.

104. Scrutiny Review Groups

The Vice-Chair would be requested to give an update at the next meeting.

105. Workplan 2022/23

It was RESOLVED that the Head of Finance and Property be requested to provide or commission a briefing on Pension Fund arrangements in the new municipal year and that this be added to the work plan.