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**SCRUTINY REVIEW – BURNLEY LEISURE**



<b>DATE</b>	<b>270317</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>Leisure &amp; Culture</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee</b>
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**PURPOSE**

1. To consider the outcomes of the Scrutiny Review of Burnley Leisure.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. That the Executive be recommended that Burnley Leisure be encouraged to:
  - a. Continue to develop the marketing strategy to ensure the Trust continues to attract new and casual members, including consideration of development of a dedicated marketing position.
  - b. As part of the renewal of the booking system contract, to consider charges for box office bookings as part of the negotiations.
  - c. Consider implementing a desktop financial review of the Trust as part of the three yearly contract refresh.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

3. To ensure the continued development of the Trust and the facilities

**SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS**

4. A cross-party group was established to review aspects of Burnley Leisure, including service provision, financial stability, and through the critical friend approach, to suggest strategies which could strengthen the relationship between the Council and Burnley Leisure.
5. Sub-groups were established to consider finances; facilities and marketing.
6. **Facilities**  
 The group visited the following facilities:  
*Padiham Leisure Centre* – impressive facilities offering a modern leisure package, including those around the centre (play facilities, pump track, bowling). Members were very impressed by the knowledge and support offered by staff members.

*Prairie Sports Village* – Modern and innovative facilities – a real asset to the Leisure offer

that appear to be well used. Members were concerned by the incline down to the building. Since the visit, a fence has been installed.

*St Peter's Centre* – Impressive state of the art equipment, many varied activities for all the community. There were issues due to the size of the carpark, but there were other parking areas in the vicinity that mitigated the problem.

*Mechanics Theatre* – The working group were given a tour of the facility, and met with the Management Team for an explanation of processes and business strategies. The partnership with the catering provider continues to be successful – with bookings already received for Christmas 2017! The theatre was always heavily subsidised, but it is clear to see that the subsidy per seat is continuing to reduce, and that the future appears to be extremely positive. An issue regarding fees charged on 'in person' ticket purchases with a debit card. This was part of the contract with the booking system, but during contract renewal could be negotiated.

## **7. Marketing**

In order to ensure the trust continues to attract business, a vibrant and energetic marketing strategy is needed. It is clear that this in place, evidenced by the return of membership numbers to healthier levels following the challenge posed by low-cost gyms being established locally.

The Trust have developed their marketing strategy, and have been working in partnership with the Council to deliver new campaigns in the press, and on social media, and new publicity material. In order to further develop this, the Scrutiny Group suggested the Trust could consider the establishment of a pilot Marketing post, with a view to the post becoming self-financing via additional business generated.

## **8. Finance**

Members reviewed the Annual Reports and other associated material, and held question and answer sessions with officers of the Council and Leisure Trust. Following this, members were satisfied that the Trust had responded appropriately to the challenge posed by low cost gyms, and that the Trust had continued to work hard to deliver value for money services on behalf of the Council.

Members suggested that as part of the three yearly contract refresh, a similar desktop review could be considered.

Finally, the working group wish to thank the management and staff of Burnley Leisure and officers of the Council who have helped to facilitate this review.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND BUDGET PROVISION**

9. None.

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

10. None.

**DETAILS OF CONSULTATION**

11. None.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12. None.

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

**PLEASE CONTACT: Scrutiny Chair -  
Councillor Andy Tatchell**

**ALSO:**