

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JANUARY 2019

Present: Councillor Howells(Chairperson)
Councillors Henshaw, Gordon, Robson and Stubbs

50 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gavin Hill-John, Simmons and Sattar.

51 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

52 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

53 : GLL - REVIEW OF DELIVERY

The Chairperson welcomed Jason Curtis and Dawn Pinder from GLL, alongside Councillor Peter Bradbury (Cabinet Member Culture & Leisure), Jon Maidment (Operational Manager Parks & Sport) and Sarah Stork (Leisure Client Services Manager) to the meeting.

The Chairperson advised Members that this item enabled them to review the 15-year partnership with GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited), who took over responsibility for running 8 Leisure Centres in Cardiff. This item enabled Members to evaluate the progress made in the second year of the contract, including consideration of the capital programme, participation and usage rates and whether there are any changes to the Council's commitments or to risks to the Council.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Bradbury to make a statement in which he said that it had been a good year for the partnership with huge progress made in a number of areas; customer satisfaction had increased and people now understand the partnership between GLL and the Council. He advised that GLL had honoured all the promises they had made and meetings held with them were genuinely good with frank discussions to take things forward; adding that there were more meetings held now than before the partnership, and that things were done more quickly. Members were advised that there were opportunities in the next year or so to take the leisure service offer further forward.

Members were provided with a presentation from Jason Curtis and the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members.

Members asked if the aim for the contract to be zero subsidy by 20/20 was on track and were advised that the full year accounts were not available as yet but huge progress had been made towards this.

Members asked with reference to attrition whether this figure was after those people who do not renew their membership and were advised that this was correct.

Members wondered where women only provision was available and were advised that this is still provided at Maindy as it has been previously and that it is also provided at the new Star Hub too.

Members noted that attendance was up and asked how this related to GLL's target. Members were advised that it was 2% above target.

Members were interested to know if there had been any public feedback on the new facilities and were advised that there had been and it was generally good; there had been some disruption during works being carried out but they had kept to timescales and services had been delivered. Members noted that customer satisfaction was up by 5% on the previous year.

A Member had been contacted about the changing rooms at the Star Hub saying that a customer had felt vulnerable; Members noted that there had been a petition presented to Council about this. Members discussed Village Changing Rooms, it was noted that Officers had liaised with GLL on this, Village changing was the norm across the industry enabling family use. The Cabinet Member advised that GLL takes safeguarding very seriously and whilst the Star Hub is a shared site the security for the whole site is the Council's responsibility; there had been a very small number of complaints of misuse, people didn't like the modern trend of village changing. The Cabinet Member added that if concerns continue then Members should contact GLL and the Cabinet and submit evidence, then it would be investigated. The Cabinet Member stated that village changing is common in such places such as Bluestone and he was satisfied that the safeguarding is right, and risks are limited as far as they can be; he added that there are male and female only dry changing areas in addition to the village changing area, which also has individual cubicles within it.

Members discussed staff training and asked if all staff are trained to use defibrillators and to administer first aid, to enable them to look after the people who are targeted to use the service for health benefits. Members were advised that all staff are trained as part of their development, and trained on defibrillators quarterly.

Members noted that customer satisfaction was measured and asked if complaints were also measured. Members were advised that GLL report regularly to clients but these are figures rather than percentages, but this was something they could do going forward.

With reference to Welsh Language Standards, Members asked if there were any areas that were not being met and were advised that there weren't, all correspondence and information is bilingual as well as Job Application forms and website; Bilingual Cardiff are used for the translation service. Members were advised that there are Welsh Swimming lessons offered too.

Members asked for more information on Job Chats and were advised that these were appraisals.

Members noted the improvement in sickness absence rates and asked what had been done to reduce this. Members were advised that it was a mixture of things including regular contact, meetings, support and quick referrals to occupational health. Members were advised that the level of sickness absence fluctuates throughout the year but in December it was 5.6% FTE.

Members discussed the Maindy Cycle Track and Maindy Flyers, noting the work of the volunteers. The Cabinet Member said he had met with them during the summer and there were lots of people joining the club; they have aspirations and the Council and GLL will support them as they are an asset to the leisure centre.

With regards to Capital Investments, Members asked if the budget was sufficient for the works planned or if there were unforeseen costs. Members were advised that lots of work/projects had already been done and there was some money left; GLL were confident that they would spend it well but they could always do more. Officers added that the Council has responsibility for the outside of the buildings and roofs and had invested in this area.

Members noted that a previous scrutiny had identified that cafes in leisure centres were closing and asked if this had had any impact. Members were advised that there were still people who would like cafes but GLL hadn't been inundated with requests; GLL are looking to see if there are opportunities to work with community facilities for the larger centres.

With reference to the reducing Council subsidy, Members asked if there were plans to increase fees for clubs to offset this and were advised that there were no plans to increase fees above inflation. Officers added that the contract was strict in this area and sets boundaries regarding price increases. The Cabinet Member added that they don't receive any complaints about the prices; the project liaison board have had discussions regarding improving services and bringing in additional services to drive up income.

Members commended the work that GLL had done with Libraries, the Police and the Hubs in challenging circumstances.

Members noted that residents liked the Star Hub but were concerned that there were no early morning opening/sessions to attend before work and asked if there were any plans to extend opening hours to compete with the private sector. Members were advised that GLL can adapt to local circumstances and if there was demand they could try it, even if it was for one day a week to trial it. The Cabinet Member added that this has been fed back to the Project Liaison Board, if a need can be demonstrated then it should be tried as it could grow the customer base and help to reduce the subsidy.

With regards to availability of classes, Members asked how GLL are doing with the number of classes offered and take up. Members were advised that they had reduced the number of classes but this was starting to pick up again; adding if classes are well attended they would look to put more on, it was all based on demand, advertising and promoting classes was key too. Members were advised that Junior Membership had increased and GLL were looking at Group fitness

sessions responding to community needs and currently they were adding classes such as Yoga and Pilates.

RESOLVED: that the views of the Committee would be discussed during the way forward section of the meeting and a letter sent to the Cabinet Member in due course.

54 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chairperson advised Members that this item enabled them to consider correspondence, receive a copy of the relevant consultation budgetary proposals, receive a copy of the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report 2017-18 and the Council's response to this and details of the City Deal scrutiny committee minutes October 2018.

The Scrutiny Officer advised that there were a number of responses still awaited to Chairs letter and the Chair asked that these are followed up.

Members were advised that the next meeting would be the Budget Scrutiny meeting and the Scrutiny Officer outlined the main budget proposals for the Committee; advising that consultation EIA's are available on the council's website and via the hyperlink in the cover report and these would have more detail than the budget lines.

Members noted that they had been contacted by Artes Mundi and the Chair advised that he would contact them to ask if they would like this be treated as a written submission.

With reference to Public Library Standards, the Scrutiny Officer advised that this item previously came to committee as a stand-alone item but as there had been no real issues it had come as part of committee business this time. Members were advised that Cardiff was meeting 11 of the 12 core entitlements and the 12th would be met by the end of this quarter; of the quality indicator targets, 2 had been met in full, 2 in part and 1 was not met. In relation to the Community and Housing response, Members were advised this states that Cardiff has the highest rating across Wales and that it sets out the next steps with regards to wellbeing hubs, mapping work was being carried out on this currently. Members noted that staff per capita in relation to Hubs was still an issue.

The Scrutiny Officer advised Members of the City Deal Joint Overview Scrutiny Committee; confidential draft minutes had been circulated; a visit to the ICE was planned and a work programming meeting was scheduled.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

55 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None

56 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Budget Scrutiny - Tuesday 19th February 4.30pm.

The meeting terminated at 5.45 pm