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**MINUTES OF THE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON MONDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 7.30 P.M.  
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WEELEY**

**Present:** Councillors Challinor (Chairman), D R Mayzes (Vice-Chairman), Aldis, R Callender, Colbourne, D Oxley and Talbot

**Also Present:** Councillor M Platt (Culture, Tourism, Leisure Services and Events Portfolio Holder) and Councillor Griffiths (at the invitation of the Committee)

**In Attendance:** Democratic Services Manager (Colin Sweeney), Operations Manager (Mike Carran) and Democratic Services Officer (Janey Nice)

**22. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and thanked the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism, Leisure Services and Events (Councillor M Platt) and Councillor Griffiths for attending.

**23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were none.

**24. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 22 September 2014, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**26. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman altered the order of business as hereinafter recorded in these minutes.

**27. POTENTIAL TOPICS FOR EXAMINATION BY A MEMBER WORKING PARTY -  
REPORT BY THE VICE-CHAIRMAN, COUNCILLOR D R MAYZES**

The Chairman invited Members to ask questions of Councillor D R Mayzes, who had written a report to look at inward investment and growth with a view to updating members of the committee on the activity of the Council, the Cabinet and the Leader and Portfolio Holder around this area of work. This topic had been part of the Committee Members' remit to research a working topic which had related to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

The Committee had two questions which were answered by Councillor D R Mayzes and Councillor Talbot complimented him on the work he had put into his report.

**28. PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CULTURE, TOURISM, LEISURE SERVICES AND  
EVENTS**

The Chairman invited the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism, Leisure Services and Events (Councillor Platt) to address the Committee on the challenges he had faced during his comparatively short time in office and to provide members with an overview of his Portfolio.

Councillor Platt provided the Committee with an insight into his Portfolio and gave each member of the Committee a copy of the free magazine, "Leisure Time", which, amongst other things, highlighted an interview where Councillor Platt had said that the Council now operated its Leisure Services in a more business-like manner.

In response to Members' questions and issues raised, Councillor Platt and the Council's Operations Manager (Mike Carran) advised Members that customers of the Dovercourt Swimming Pool were extremely happy with the refurbishment works that had been carried out and it was hoped that this would bring an upsurge in business to the Dovercourt and Frinton and Walton Swimming Pools once refurbishment works here had also been completed.

Councillor Platt said that, with regard to whether more money would be made from outsourcing Leisure Services, this was unlikely since the Council's in-house teams were doing a fantastic job and the Brightlingsea Lido could not be run as successfully in the private sector.

In response to a question as to what Councillor Platt's vision for culture within the District might be, he said that the Martello Tower was the only venue in Clacton-on-Sea currently running art displays and there was an active Arts Festival in Harwich. He added that this was still early days as different events were being advertised.

Concern was raised by Members as to the sole provision of vending machines for refreshments within Clacton Leisure Centre and whether the Council would consider reopening facilities within the Leisure Centre, which previously provided a wider range of hot and cold food and drink. In response, Councillor Platt said that the café area in the Clacton Leisure Centre was being looked at to be turned into a treatment area with a possible small refreshment area. The Operations Manager added that Leisure Services had looked into the viability of providing on-site refreshments but it was no longer viable from a business point of view.

In response to a Member's question as to the potential for having a museum based in Clacton-on-Sea, Councillor Platt said that it was planned to keep the Martello Tower as an arts facility with some specialised displays in the Town Hall foyer. He added that if the arts displays at the Martello Tower continued to be successful, then there was the possibility that art and other displays could be expanded into the nearby Tower.

With regard to promoting Tendring and, in particular, from a cultural and leisure-focussed perspective, Councillor Platt said that a DVD portraying the attractions of Clacton-on-Sea as a family holiday resort was an idea worth investigating.

## **29. MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS ACROSS THE COUNCIL'S LEISURE FACILITIES**

The Council's Operations Manager delivered a presentation on the Council's Sports Facilities and Maintenance Arrangements, which included repair and maintenance and the budget set aside for this; maintenance contracts and some examples of these; maintenance standards and how the Council's staff made users aware of defective equipment; the procedure used to get repairs done and larger scale projects.

Mr Carran said that appropriate Council's contracts were scrutinised by its Legal Services Department. Maintenance contracts, he said, were normally short in terms of their duration, usually 12 months, and that these dealt with proactive and reactive maintenance. He said the total maintenance budget across all of the leisure centres was £170,000 per annum, which covered everything from replacing light bulbs to major swimming pool plant repair.

Mr Carran went on to say that the Council aimed to have all such repairs dealt with within 48 hours of being reported and that, often, these were being achieved in a lesser time. He added that each centre Manager put forward proposals of what needed to be done,

i.e. what equipment was coming to the end of its life, which then became part of a three-year revolving maintenance programme. He said there were a number of different maintenance contracts, usually only lasting a year, as there was not a lot of money for contractors in maintenance agreements. He added that one of the biggest contracts was for the ventilation, plumbing and filtration systems where contractors serviced the centres as required.

Mr Carran was pleased to inform the Committee that many of the contracts were awarded to local companies rather than larger national companies as they tended to respond more quickly to any call-outs, especially in the evenings. He added that call-out times were a big issue and he was keen that customers were kept advised of any repairs and the time undertaken for repairs to take place. Mr Carran further added that income to the Council from leisure centre membership fees was in the region of £800,000 per annum and it was therefore imperative that equipment was repaired within the 48 hours target set.

In conclusion, Mr Carran said that some of the larger-scale projects had been the refurbishment of the Dovercourt and Frinton and Walton Swimming Pools, improvements to the Harwich Sports Centre's changing rooms, Clacton Leisure Centre's Tennis Courts, interior painting at some centres and the installation of solar panels for use at Manningtree Sports Centre.

In response to Members' questions and issues raised, Mr Carran said that, with regard to the employment of an in-house maintenance person to visit sites and carry out minor repairs, this would prove difficult since any such person would now be required to hold appropriate certification covering a wide range of disciplines as well as provision having to be made in respect of salary, public liability insurance etc.

He said that, whereas some parts could be difficult to obtain at short notice, other items, e.g. shower heads, were bought in extra quantities in order to allow for descaling and replacement on a regular basis. With regard to whether leisure centres used similar equipment, Mr Carran said that, in the Eastern Region, a tender and framework process was in place, which allowed for the same equipment to be acquired for use at all such leisure facilities.

In conclusion and in response to a question about the use of solar panels on the Council's facilities, Mr Carran said that this had proved successful at the Manningtree Sports Centre, in the joint agreement with Manningtree School, and had already lowered utility bills there. He added this was being monitored to see if solar panels could be used at other sites.

The Chairman summed up, thanking the Portfolio Holder and Operations Manager for their time. She added she was pleased to see the use of local companies and that contracts were being constantly revised. The Chairman also asked if the Operations Manager could report back to the Committee bi-annually so that it could be kept updated on repairs and maintenance contracts.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism, Leisure Services and Events and Operations Manager both left the meeting at this time.

## **29. POTENTIAL TOPICS FOR EXAMINATION BY A MEMBER WORKING PARTY**

Committee members reported there had been no changes or updates concerning their specific topics.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.28 p.m.

Chairman