

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee**  
held on Friday, 30th July, 2010 at Committee Suite 2/3 - Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

## **PRESENT**

### **Cabinet Members**

Councillor A Knowles (Chairman)  
Councillor David Brown

### **Advisory Members**

Councillor Ainsley Arnold  
Councillor Terry Beard  
Councillor John Hammond  
Councillor Ray Westwood

### **Officers**

Mark Wheelton, Leisure and Green Spaces Manager  
Keith Pickton, Leisure Facilities Manager  
Rachel Graves, Democratic Services Officer(none)

### **Apologies**

Councillors Roland Domleo and Frank Keegan

## **6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

## **7 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

## **8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 be approved as a correct record.

## **9 CHESHIRE EAST LEISURE FACILITIES: A POTENTIAL VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

The Sub-Committee considered a 'vision' document for Cheshire East Leisure Facilities, which was based on the discussions held at the previous meeting of the Sub-Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010.

The current main leisure facilities inherited by Cheshire East could be categorised as follows:

- Type A – Principal Towns and Key Service Centres with community swimming pools
- Type B – Joint Use High Schools with dry sports facilities only
- Type C – Other stand alone dry sports facilities
- Type D – All other school, voluntary or private sports and leisure facilities with the potential for wider community use but not currently directly financially supported for community leisure activities by the Council.

The proposed strategic approach was that Type A facilities, which were highly valued by local communities and required the highest levels of professional leisure management expertise and experience, would not be recommended for transfer out of Council control at this stage although this would need to be reviewed on a site-by-site basis.

For Types B and C it was proposed that with the right safeguards, service level agreements and client monitoring it would be possible to negotiate the transfer of the operation of some or all of these facilities to other partners, including high school governors and Town or Parish Councils. The financial savings from this could be used to pump prime and encourage via new service level agreements other high schools, primary schools and voluntary groups in Type D to consider extending community access to their facilities to help widen the availability of leisure facilities to people in their immediate localities.

Members discussed the proposals in detail and supported the approach outlined in the 'vision' document for the future delivery of the leisure service. The document would be submitted to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee before going on to Cabinet for formal approval and implementation.

## **RESOLVED**

That

- (1) the briefing document 'Cheshire East Council Leisure Facilities – A Potential Vision for the Future' be recommended as the strategic approach for the future delivery of the leisure facilities service; and
- (2) the document be submitted to Cabinet for formal approval and implementation.

## **10 INFORMATION UPDATE ON THE SWIM FREE PROGRAMME**

The Sub-Committee considered a report on how the Council was approaching the 'Swim Free' programme in the light of the recent decision to stop external grant funding on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010.

The Council had taken advantage of the Government's two year 'Swim Free' programme which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009. However, the

Department of Culture, Media & Sports had announced in June 2010 that this funding would cease from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010 and the Council would only receive the pro-rata funding up to this date.

A number of options had been suggested to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing on how to proceed from 31<sup>st</sup> July. These included:

- (a) Giving notice to all existing free swimming card holders that as a result of the withdrawal of funding, free swimming would end on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010.
- (b) Discontinue free swimming for the 60s and over on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010 but allow juniors 16 and under to continue free swimming for the school holidays until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010.
- (c) Discontinue all free swimming on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2010 but offer to transfer all previous junior and senior free swimming cardholders to the existing Council 'Everybody' options care at no extra cost.

Having considered these options, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing had asked officers to proceed with option (b) and to discontinue free swimming for those 60 and over on 31<sup>st</sup> July but to continue free swimming for those 16 and under until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010. This decision was based on the fact that there was sufficient funding available from the Government (four months to 31<sup>st</sup> July) and £100,000 from the Council's own revenue funding to allow the Council to remain within budget.

A detailed Communications Plan had been produced which aimed to deliver the message to the maximum number of users without incurring costs.

## **RESOLVED**

That the information on the 'Swim Free' programme, including the Communications Plan and associated publicity, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.20 am

Councillor A Knowles (Chairman)