

**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND
COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
PANEL
10 SEPTEMBER 2019
7.34 - 8.35 PM**



Present:

Councillors Porter (Chairman), Angell, Brossard, Brown, Ms Gaw, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Kirke and Mrs Mattick (Substitute); Mrs Temperton (Substitute)

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Mrs McKenzie-Boyle

Executive Members Present:

Councillor Harrison, Executive Member for Culture, Delivery and Public Protection
Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport

Also Present:

Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery
Damian James, Assistant Director: Contracts
Nick Smith, Head of Leisure Services
Mark Tennant, Contract Manager (Bracknell), Everyone Active
David Love, Area Contract Manager, Everyone Active

13. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 18 June 2019 be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

14. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest relating to any items on the agenda, nor any indication that Members would be participating under the party whip.

15. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

16. Public Participation

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

17. Everyone Active

In addition to the evidence pack the additional information was provided at the meeting by Mark Tennant, Contract Manager, Bracknell, Everyone Active:

- EA were attempting to reduce single use plastic across their centres but there had been some negative feedback from members so they reintroduced water cups. EA were going to talk to the manufacturers of the cups to discuss environmentally friendly options.

- The studio which had received part of the £2.8 million investment had seen a 30% increase in use.
- Virtual classes had been added during quieter times of day.
- Fun days and open days at Bracknell Leisure Centre had proved successful with Colin Jackson CBE and the Bracknell Forest Council Mayor attending to support some of these events.
- An environmental champion on site reminds people about their responsibility regarding carbon emissions and they check lights are turned off, etc.
- Customer usage was 4,000 less than the target for this year.
- Coral Reef had seen a slight downturn due to a power failure in November and some flumes had been down due to flood damage. However, improvements had shown a positive growth in usage during the summer holiday.
- Bracknell Leisure Centre was proving more popular than ever since the refurbishment.
- Mark Tennant expected the to exceed one million visits soon.
- EA were increasingly using social media and apps to connect with customers.

Following discussion, members requested EA and the Executive Member for Culture, Delivery and Public Protection take the following points into account:

Question 1 'Is the contract delivering the objectives that the Council set out at the beginning of the project?'

- Members concurred with the challenges and successes highlighted in EAs presentation.
- EA were very responsive to customer feedback.
- Environmental issues were only starting to be addressed.
- EA had a good relationship with local community groups.

Question 2 'How is Everyone Active performing and are the performance measures right?'

- Whilst members accepted not all feedback on social media regarding cleanliness had been genuine EA also acknowledged cleanliness standards, particularly at Bracknell Leisure Centre, had not been good enough in the past. Members agreed with EAs strategy to ensure robust monitoring of cleanliness in the future.
- EA should consider requesting Quest to benchmark delivery of their services against other operators.
- More consideration should be given to developing facilities and activities that were environmentally friendly.
- An energy reduction plan should be developed and should include awareness of the energy produced by the solar panels on some of the buildings; alternatives to providing paper cups, etc.
- It was anticipated implementation of LED lighting at Bracknell Leisure Centre would encourage use of the athletics track in the Winter and it would be useful to monitor this usage to assess impact.
- It was acknowledged the hot summer in 2018 had adversely impacted on the upkeep of the greens at Downshire Golf Course, and that this had been a national issue, but members were pleased to hear there would be continued investment in greens maintenance to address the downturn in performance.

Question 3 ‘Are Everyone Active’s short term and long term plans reasonable and achievable?’

- Members agreed EAs short term focus should be on cleanliness, particularly at Bracknell Leisure Centre. Future improvements would include Heads of Department auditing their area for cleanliness one day a week to ensure cleanliness was everyone’s responsibility; Contract Cleaners carrying out a deep clean every Thursday; the cleaners carrying out their duties during working hours so they could be monitored and were visible to members of the public and mystery audits to continue.
- The installation of Pool View in the next couple of months would be a useful safety system in addition to the use of lifeguards at Bracknell Leisure Centre.
- Engagement with wider community groups would be useful to ensure EA were delivering activities desired/needed by residents.
- Improved car parking facilities at Bracknell Leisure Centre should be a focus for EA and the Council in the short and long term.
- Council officers to look at possibility of creating spaces at Bracknell Leisure Centre for vulnerable members in addition to disabled and mother and toddler spaces already available.
- It was agreed long term ideas to keep Coral Reef ‘fresh’ was necessary to encourage usage.
- EA, in partnership with the Council, would look at introducing Digitickets for car parking – medium term objective.
- EA would continue to build upon work to ensure they were attracting as much custom as possible, including reaching out to users of Arena in Camberley, which was closing for two years for refurbishment.
- The success of the junior golf programme at Downshire Golf Course should be continued to ensure sustainability of the site in the future.
- The sports development team should look at the use of the athletic track during quiet periods.
- Assess options locally for how to deal with national downturn in take up of squash and badminton.
- The Council should look at additional ways of encouraging and publicising what is available at EA sites.

18. Executive Forward Plan

Members received and noted the scheduled Key and Non-Key Executive Decisions relating to Environment, Culture and Communities.

19. Any other business

Members agreed to hold a one-off session to discuss burial space in the Borough in the future, to be held on 14 October.

CHAIRMAN