

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 3 December 2024

Attendance:

Councillors
Cramoysan (Chairperson)

Bennett
Bolton
Brophy

Latham
Lee
Power

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Aron

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Becker (Cabinet Member for Community and Engagement) and
Learney (Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency).

[Full Video Recording](#)

1. **APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received as set out above

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Power declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest concerning matters referring to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) due to her association with an organisation that was applying for grants quoting back the BAP to the council.

Councillor Lee made a personal statement that he was Trustee of WinACC should any discussion arise in this respect during the consideration of items.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements made at this meeting.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2024 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No members of the public were present to make representations.

6. **UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE OF THE COUNCILS LEISURE FACILITIES MANAGED UNDER CONTRACT BY EVERYONE ACTIVE (HEP042)**

The Chair welcomed Nigel Ashton, General Manager of Everyone Active to the meeting to provide an update and answer questions thereon.

The Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing introduced the report providing further detail on the wider health and wellbeing offer. Members' attention was drawn to the 'Outstanding' rating achievement given in the Quest accreditation of the Winchester Sports and Leisure Park (WSLP) in May 2024 as one of only four facilities in England to achieve this rating, the National Operator of the Year award given to Everyone Active at the UK Active awards on October 2024 and working alongside this to get the WSLP shortlisted in the Regional Centre of the Year award and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion award for the Winchester Gold Programme which reinforced that there was a high quality operator working to deliver positive impact across the district.

Members were reminded that there was a formal contract management process in place which included member representation via the advisory board.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Service Lead: Community and Wellbeing, the Contract Manager and the General Manager, Everyone Active.

- (i) Capacity levels and footfall figures for wet side and dry side activities and plans to maximise capacity and increase membership uptake at WSLP and Meadowside Leisure Centre.
- (ii) The measures taken to ensure the safety and security of the leisure facilities managed by Everyone Active.
- (iii) Further clarification was sought on the financial performance of the leisure facilities and how it compared to the projected targets.
- (iv) Customer satisfaction levels and the feedback received from users of the leisure facilities and digital accessibility.
- (v) Additional information was requested on the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities, particularly in relation to any recent upgrades or renovations.
- (vi) The accessibility of leisure facilities for individuals with disabilities and the measures in place to accommodate their needs.
- (vii) Further details were sought on the marketing and promotional strategies employed to attract more users to the leisure facilities.

- (viii) The impact of leisure facilities on the local community and any initiatives in place to engage with residents.
- (ix) Clarification was requested on the staffing levels at the leisure facilities and any challenges faced in recruiting and retaining staff.
- (x) Environmental sustainability practices adopted by Everyone Active in managing the leisure facilities.
- (xi) Additional information was sought on future plans for the leisure facilities and any upcoming projects or developments.
- (xii) The measures in place to ensure the safety of children using the leisure facilities.
- (xiii) Further clarification was sought on the pricing structure of the leisure facilities and any plans for future adjustments.
- (xiv) The training programmes available for staff at the leisure facilities.
- (xv) Additional information was requested on the partnerships and collaborations with local organisations to enhance the services offered at the leisure facilities.
- (xvi) The promotion of inclusivity and diversity within the leisure facilities.
- (xvii) Further details were sought on the impact of the leisure facilities on the physical and mental well-being of the community.
- (xviii) The feedback mechanisms in place for users to provide suggestions and complaints.
- (xix) Clarification was requested on the measures taken to ensure the cleanliness and hygiene of the leisure facilities.
- (xx) Emergency procedures and protocols in place at the leisure facilities.
- (xxi) Additional information was sought on the technological advancements and innovations being implemented at the leisure facilities.

At the conclusion of debate, the committee thanked Nigel Ashton and officers for their attendance, the positive achievements and for providing detailed information regarding contract performance.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

7. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT NATURE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025-2030 (PRESENTATION)**

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency introduced the item which provided proposals to refresh the council's strategic approach to nature improvement in the district, as a result of local and national policy changes. It was recognised that there were limited resources available and the need to make considerable savings over coming years was emphasised.

The Service Lead: Sustainability and Natural Environment and Principal Ecologist/Biodiversity Officer gave a presentation which set out the current position, changes since the creation of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the proposed way forward. The views of the committee were sought regarding

the shaping of the Nature Improvement Plan (NIP) to ensure the benefits of aligning with other strategies and plans were maximised.

The committee proceeded to ask questions and comment on the following matters which were responded to by the Cabinet Member, the Service Lead: Sustainability and Natural Environment and Principal Ecologist/Biodiversity Officer.

- (i) The differences between a Nature Improvement Plan (NIP) and a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).
- (ii) Further clarification was sought on how third parties could be enabled to promote the council's achievements and identify associated costs.
- (iii) The availability of data on the quantity of bats and swifts before and after interventions to justify expenses.
- (iv) Clarification was requested on what bringing together planning and nature work closer together would entail.
- (v) A question was asked about how carbon sequestration was factored into the local nature recovery strategy.
- (vi) Further clarification was sought on the possibility of creating a directory of nature conservation groups and citizen scientists.
- (vii) The status of chalk streams in the local nature recovery strategy.
- (viii) Clarification was requested on whether wetland could be acquired under the land acquisition reference.
- (ix) The possibility of seeing a positive plan to actively engage and enlist parish councils and volunteer groups in the NIP.
- (x) Further clarification was sought on how communications could be improved to take the public with the council on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and nature improvement.
- (xi) The availability of standard resources for "No Mow May" to address public queries.

During debate, the committee emphasised the need to maximise assets and leverage strategies like BNG, local network recovery, ecosystem services, and local groups. Concerns were expressed regarding the resource implications of BNG in planning conditions, including monitoring, quantification, and resource allocation. The committee outlined the importance of effective use of resources, along with the valuable role of citizen scientists in collecting data and providing credibility. There was a call for clear Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), measurable outcomes, and cost-benefit analysis and the importance of creating a legacy for the district and future cycles was highlighted.

At the conclusion of debate, the committee thanked officers and the Cabinet Member for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be received, and the comments raised by the committee, as summarised above, be noted.

8. **TO NOTE THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2024/25**

Councillor Lee raised a query regarding the procedure to request for items be added to the work plan for consideration by the committee.

In response, the Strategic Director clarified that for research topics, a group of members could be formed to explore the matter in depth which would then be shared with members and reported back to the committee. In respect of a matter requiring delivery by the council, a work request would need to be submitted for consideration by Chief Officers and Cabinet Members to establish if resources were available.

In addition, Councillor Lee reminded the committee there had been a question raised at Council on 18 September 2024 in relation to community energy and renewable energy which he suggested the committee may wish to consider. In response, Councillor Learney advised that this matter would be explored in the context of the Council Plan at the next meeting of Cabinet with scoping work to be carried out in due course on this matter.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme for 2024/25 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and concluded at 8.40 pm

Chairperson