

MINUTE of MEETING of the WEST LOTHIAN LEISURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE held within CONFERENCE ROOM 3, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 7 JUNE 2023.

Present – Councillors Craig Meek (Chair), Cathy Muldoon, Alison Adamson, Anne McMillan and Pauline Stafford (substituting for Councillor Andrew Miller)

Apologies – Councillor Andrew Miller

In attendance

Alan Colquhoun – Strategic Partnership Manager, WLC

Robert Young – Senior Service Accountant, WLC

Ben Lamb – Chief Executive Officer, WLL

Andrew Heron – Head of Finance, WLL

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Anne McMillan stated that she was a council appointee to Firefly Arts; as she had no financial interest nor was she on the Firefly Arts Board, she would remain in the meeting.

Councillor Craig Meek stated that he had close family who were members of Xcite.

Councillor Pauline Stafford stated that at a previous Council Executive meeting, which she had attended as observer, she had heard members declare having family members attending Xcite.

2 MINUTES

The committee approved the minute of its meeting held on 23 February 2023. The Chair thereafter signed the minute.

3 PRIVATE SESSION

The committee resolved under Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4 WEST LOTHIAN LEISURE FINANCIAL POSITION

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on West Lothian Leisure's (WLL) financial position.

During discussion, officers and WLL provided a number of clarifications regarding usage of various funds in the report, including funding for the Winchburgh campus and the Covid recovery fund. In response to a question from members, it was noted that the council had not received any consequential funding for investing in swimming pools from the UK government.

Officers also advised that notes of interest regarding alternative operators on the sites proposed for closure were currently being reviewed and results would be reported to Council Executive on 20 June.

Finally, the problems currently faced by the whole leisure sector were reiterated.

It was recommended that the committee note:

1. WLL's financial performance for the 12 months to 31 March 2023;
2. That the funding agreement between West Lothian Council ("council") and WLL for the year to 31 March 2024 had been signed;
3. WLL's budgeted financial performance for the year to 31 March 2024; and
4. That WLL had requested that the Service Specification between the council and WLL be amended to allow WLL to cease operating four of its sites from 31 August 2023 and that Council Executive was considering this request.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

5 MONITORING REPORT: CULTURE, SPORT, LEISURE & OUTDOOR EDUCATION

The committee considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive providing an update on the operational performance of Culture, Sport, Leisure and Outdoor Education services delivered by West Lothian Leisure (WLL), for the period to March 2023, and provides a summary of budget-setting and future financial and operational planning work to date.

During discussion, officers provided more detail on works undertaken for business improvements and WLL provided information on Howden Park Centre bookings.

Members reiterated the impact of swimming pool closures, and officers advised that they were currently reviewing alternative swimming pool provision.

Finally, Xcite membership was briefly discussed.

It was recommended that the committee note the updates on WLL's operational performance and related matters outlined in the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.