LEISURE AND ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 21st September, 2011

Present: Cllr T J Robins (Chairman), Cllr P F Bolt (Vice-Chairman), Cllr A W Allison, Cllr Mrs J M Bellamy, Cllr Ms V M C Branson, Cllr Mrs B A Brown, Cllr Miss J R L Elks, Cllr D Keeley, Cllrs A S Oakley and Cllr R Taylor.

Councillors Coffin, Mrs Heslop, N Heslop, Miss Moloney, Mrs Murray, Rhodes, Rogers, Ms Spence and Worrall were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Representative: Mr A Nicholl (Tonbridge Sports Association).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Davis, Edmondston-Low and Lancaster.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

LAA DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

11/035

There were no declarations of interest made.

LAA MINUTES 11/036

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting of the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board held on 23 May 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

LAA KENT COUNTY COUNCIL - YOUTH SERVICE REVIEW

11/037

Decision Notice D110119MEM

The Chief Leisure Officer introduced Mr John Turner, the Assistant Director of Kent Youth Service, who reported the proposed changes to the delivery of youth services within the County currently the subject of a consultation exercise by Kent County Council. Members' attention was also drawn to a letter tabled at the meeting from Tracey Crouch, Member of Parliament for Chatham and Aylesford, in response to the consultation exercise and which set out her opposition to the proposals.

An information sheet provided by the County Council summarising the main points of the review was attached at Annex 1 to the report.

It was explained that the proposed new model combined direct delivery with commissioning local providers to deliver opportunities for young people in the local community. The Service Transformation Proposal being put forward by the County Council proposed that the Avebury Avenue Adult Education Centre in Tonbridge be the new hub for the borough. The future of SAMAYS Youth Centre in Snodland was threatened as it would no longer be required for direct delivery purposes and this was a major cause of concern to the Borough Council. In its proposals the County Council suggested that under its commissioning model those wishing to offer youth work in the locality could, subject to agreement, use the existing building.

Members challenged the County proposals, particularly the proposal to withdraw direct service delivery at SAMAYS Youth Centre, and expressed serious concern that these did not represent or support youth provision in the most deprived part of the Borough. In addition, it was difficult to understand the motivation behind the proposal as this facility was a well attended, valued and successful community project. The inadequate public transport links to other parts of the Borough also made it difficult for young people to access the alternative proposal in There was also serious concern regarding the proposed Tonbridae. reduction in youth support resources generally and how this would impact on the amount and quality of youth outreach work in all parts of the Borough, including the rural areas. Members questioned whether the service delivery model proposed was appropriate for Tonbridge and Malling and whether assumptions had been made without proper needs based analysis, especially in Tonbridge. Concern was expressed that a service model was being imposed on the Borough Council without any Kent County Council was invited to reconsider evidence to support it. the proposals put forward in liaison with the Borough Council.

Finally, Members remained unconvinced that the same or an improved level of service could be achieved by the proposed commissioning from the voluntary sector and external providers.

RECOMMENDED: That a formal response to Kent County Council's review of its Youth Service be prepared in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts and the Chairman of the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board.

LAA GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

11/038

Decision Notice D110120MEM

The joint report of the Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts recommended a two year extension to the Council's current Grounds Maintenance Contract in accordance with the conditions of the contract. It was noted that at the current time there were no objections to the contract being extended.

RECOMMENDED: That the option to extend the existing Grounds Maintenance Contract for a further two years through to 31 December 2014 be approved.

LAA LEYBOURNE LAKES COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN 11/039

Decision Notice D110121MEM

Further to Decision No D110056MEM, the report brought forward comments received as part of the public consultation exercise on the draft Leybourne Lakes Country Park Management Plan and recommended its final approval.

A summary of the comments received and proposed amendments were set out in Annex 1 of the report. The proposal to develop and annex a more detailed strategy for wildlife management to the main site Management Plan was noted.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposed amendments to the Leybourne Lakes Country Park Management Plan, highlighted at Annex 1 to the report, be formally adopted.

LAA LEYBOURNE LAKES COUNTRY PARK - WATER SPORTS 11/040 CONCESSION

Decision Notice D110122MEM

Consideration was given to the proposed terms and conditions of the lease for the Water Sports Concession at Leybourne Lakes Country Park set out in the joint report of the Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts.

Particular reference was made to the intention of increasing the lease term to ten years, with a mutual break clause on 6 months prior written notice from year five. Members requested that consideration be given to a rent review during the contract term.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposed terms and conditions for the Leybourne Lakes Country Park Water Sports Concession as outlined in the report be agreed.

LAA PUBLIC OPEN SPACE - ACCESS AUDITS

11/041

Decision Notice D110123MEM

The joint report of the Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts sought approval of a draft Access Audit for Leybourne Lakes Country Park and recommended that an access audit be undertaken at Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground in 2012.

RECOMMENDED: That

(1) the draft Access Audit and Improvement Plan for Leybourne Lakes Country Park, as shown at Annex 1 to the report, be approved;

(2) improvement actions be implemented on a prioritised basis and in

accordance with existing budgets; and

(3) an access audit of Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground be carried out in summer 2012 in liaison with the Council's Access Officer.

LAA MUSIC/ARTS FESTIVALS

11/042

Decision Notice D110124MEM

The joint report of the Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts detailed a number of music/arts festivals across the Borough and recommended that in 2012 the Council's Festival of Music at Tonbridge Castle be incorporated within the Tonbridge Arts Festival programme.

It was noted that a draft proposal received from Opera Brava for 2012 was currently being considered in liaison with the Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee and the Director of Finance and would be subject to a detailed financial appraisal, particularly relating to the management of financial risk. Members expressed disappointment at the low number of tickets sold for the 2011 event and were reassured that financial viability would be assessed as part of the discussions with the Director of Finance.

Members welcomed and supported the investment in music and arts as it added value to what was offered to residents, as well as providing a positive investment in youth.

RECOMMENDED: That

(1) the Council continue to support the Music/Arts Festivals outlined in the report in order to maximise the benefits for the arts through partnerships with others;

(2) the Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music be incorporated into the Tonbridge Arts Festival programme as an associated event in 2012; and

(3) the proposed partnership with Opera Brava for the 2012 Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music be considered in liaison with Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee and the Director of Finance, and a report be presented to the next meeting of the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board.

LAA THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE BEACONS

11/043

Decision Notice D110125MEM

The joint report of the Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts outlined a suggested approach to the Council's involvement in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacon project in June 2012.

Members asked that consideration be given to identifying an alternative site for a Jubilee Beacon in case English Heritage refused approval for Tonbridge Castle.

RECOMMENDED: That

(1) subject to English Heritage approval, a church tower beacon be installed at Tonbridge Castle to help mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations; and

(2) local school children be involved in a history based project linked to the historical role and significance of the monarchy.

LAA HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

11/044

Decision Notice D110126MEM

Members received an update on activities for children and young people that took place over the summer holidays, including the Summer Playscheme, Activate and Y2 Crew. It was noted that whilst there was a decrease in the number of Summer Playscheme places taken compared to 2010, 80% of all places had been booked. Particular reference was made to the significant variations in the uptake at different venues for the Summer Playscheme. This issue would be carefully reviewed in advance of next year's scheme to ensure it operated as cost effectively as possible and places were provided in accordance with demand.

Members also noted the potential loss of a Playscheme venue in Snodland if the Kent County Council proposals regarding youth service provision went ahead.

RECOMMENDED: That the outcome of the Council's 2011 Summer Activity Programmes for young people be noted and a review report be submitted to the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

LAA YOUNG ACHIEVERS AWARD

11/045

Decision Notice D110127MEM

The report gave details of nominations for the Council's Young Achievers Award for consideration.

RECOMMENDED: That the Young Achiever Awards be made to Jack Green and Robbie Farnham-Rose for their outstanding achievements in athletics.

LAA LEISURE FACILITIES - CHRISTMAS CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS

11/046

Decision Notice D110128MEM

The proposed Christmas closure arrangements for the Council's leisure facilities were considered following consultation with the Buildings and Facilities Manager, and took into account essential maintenance works at individual sites. The overall approach generally followed the principles adopted for each facility in recent years. Attention was drawn to an anticipated delay in progressing a Capital Plan project at Tonbridge Swimming Pool. Due to difficulties with the procurement process the replacement of the existing ozone generator was not likely to take place over the Christmas period but early the following year.

RECOMMENDED: That the Christmas closure arrangements for the Council's leisure and customer services facilities, as detailed in the report, be agreed and publicised in the December edition of Here and Now and other appropriate outlets.

LAA TONBRIDGE CASTLE GATEHOUSE CHARGES

11/047

Decision Notice D110129MEM

The joint report of the Central Services Director and the Director of Finance presented proposed revised charges for the Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse tourist attraction for implementation from 1 April 2012. It was noted that the proposed charges had been brought forward to reflect the current market conditions. The proposal was supported in principle, although it was requested that a further review be done to ensure that there was a consistency and rationale to the proposals.

RECOMMENDED: That

(1) the proposed charges for Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse, as outlined in the report, be agreed for implementation from 1 April 2012; and

(2) these charges be reflected in the appropriate tourism marketing material.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

LAA LEISURE FACILITIES - FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Chief Leisure Officer presented management information summaries for Larkfield Leisure Centre, Angel Centre, Tonbridge Swimming Pool, Poult Wood Golf Centre, Tonbridge Castle/Customer Services, Tonbridge Cemetery, Country Parks Car Park income and Poult Wood Grounds maintenance.

Particular reference was made to the Leisure Services Business Unit's overall financial position to the end of July 2011 which was below profile by £251,662. It was noted that this deficit was offset by the corporate economic adjustment and reserve funding and was, therefore, reduced to £138,544. Members received a verbal update of the financial position up to the end of August and were pleased to note a slightly improving trend with the actual deficit reduced to £130K below profile. However, Members were warned that a deficit at year end was still anticipated. The financial performance was closely monitored throughout the year in liaison with the Director of Finance and Management Team.

LAA CAPITAL PLAN

11/049

Members were advised of progress with schemes contained in the Leisure Services section of the Capital Plan.

LAA PUBLIC OPEN SPACES - EXTERNALLY FUNDED IMPROVEMENTS 11/050

The Chief Leisure Officer informed Members of improvements on areas of the Council's Public Open Space, utilising funding from external sources. In relation to the projects outlined in the report over £50,000 of external funding had been achieved. It was noted that without this funding, the improvements would not have been able to be progressed.

LAA CATALYST ARTS

11/051

The report of the Chief Leisure Officer updated Members on a new Government funding opportunity available to help build the long-term resilience of arts organisations by increasing their fundraising potential.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

LAA EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

11/052

No items were considered in private.

The meeting ended at 2209 hours

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110119MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Kent County Council - Youth Service Review

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts) (Annex 1 (6.36 M/bytes)) (Annex 2)

The report highlighted proposed changes to the delivery of youth services within the county, currently the subject of a consultation exercise by Kent County Council.

Members challenged the County proposals, particularly the proposal to withdraw direct service delivery at SAMAYS Youth Centre in Snodland, and expressed serious concern that these did not represent or support youth provision in the most deprived part of the Borough. It was noted that this facility was a well attended and successful community project and the inadequate public transport links to other parts of the Borough also made it difficult for young people to access the alternative proposal in Tonbridge.

Concern was also expressed that there had not been enough needs based analysis in Tonbridge and that a service model was being imposed on the Borough Council without any evidence to support it. Kent County Council was invited to reconsider the proposals being put forward in liaison with the Borough Council.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that a formal response to Kent County Council's review of its Youth Service be prepared in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts and the Chairman of the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110120MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Grounds Maintenance Contract

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts)

The report recommended a two year extension to the Council's current Grounds Maintenance Contract in accordance with the conditions of contract.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that the option to extend the existing Grounds Maintenance Contract for a further two years through to 31 December 2014 be approved.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110121MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Leybourne Lakes Country Park Management Plan

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts) (Annex)

The report brought forward comments received as part of the public consultation exercise on the draft Leybourne Lakes Country Park Management Plan and recommended final approval of the Management Plan.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that the proposed amendments to the Leybourne Lakes Country Park Management Plan, highlighted at Annex 1 to the report, be formally adopted.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110122MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Leybourne Lakes Country Park - Water Sports Concession

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts)

The report brought forward the proposed terms and conditions of the lease for the Water Sports Concession at Leybourne Lakes Country Park for approval. It was requested that consideration be given to a rent review during the contract term.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that the proposed terms and conditions for the Leybourne Lakes Country Park Water Sports Concession as outlined in the report be agreed.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110123MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Public Open Space - Access Audits

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts) (Annex)

The report sought approval of a draft Access Audit for Leybourne Lakes Country Park and recommended that an access audit be undertaken at Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground in 2012.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that:
1) the draft Access Audit and Improvement Plan for Leybourne Lakes Country Park, as shown at Annex 1 to the report, be approved;
2) improvement actions be implemented on a prioritised basis and in

accordance with existing budgets; and

3) an access audit of Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground be carried out in summer 2012 in liaison with the Council's Access Officer.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110124MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Music/Arts Festivals

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts)

The report gave details of a number of music/arts festivals across the Borough and recommended that in 2012 the Council's Festival of Music at Tonbridge Castle be incorporated within the Tonbridge Arts Festival programme.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that:

1) the Council continue to support the Music/Arts Festivals outlined in the report in order to maximise the benefits for the arts through partnerships with others;

2) the Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music be incorporated into the Tonbridge Arts Festival programme as an associated event in 2012; and

3) the proposed partnership with Opera Brava for the 2012 Tonbridge Castle Festival of Music be considered in liaison with Tonbridge Arts Festival Committee and the Director of Finance, and a report be presented to the next meeting of the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110125MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacons

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts) (Annex)

The report outlined a suggested approach to the Council's involvement in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacon project in June 2012.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that:

1) subject to English Heritage approval, a church tower beacon be installed at Tonbridge Castle to help mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations; and

2) local school children be involved in a history based project linked to the historical role and significance of the monarchy.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110126MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Holiday Activities for Children and Young People

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts) (Annex 1) (Annex 2) (Annex 3)

(Annex 4)

The report gave an update on activities for children and young people that took place over the summer holidays, including the Summer Playscheme, Activate and Y2 Crew.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that the outcome of the Council's 2011 Summer Activity Programmes for young people be noted and a review report be submitted to the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110127MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Young Achievers Award

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts)

The report gave details of nominations for the Council's Young Achievers Award for consideration.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that Young Achiever Awards be made to Jack Green and Robbie Farnham-Rose for their outstanding achievement in athletics.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110128MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Leisure Facilities - Christmas Closure Arrangements

(Joint report of Chief Leisure Officer and Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts)

The proposed Christmas closure arrangements for the Council's leisure facilities were considered following consultation with the Buildings and Facilities Manager, and took into account essential maintenance works at individual sites. The overall approach generally followed the principles adopted for each facility in recent years.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that the Christmas closure arrangements for the Council's leisure and customer services facilities, as detailed in the report, be agreed and publicised in the December edition of Here and Now and other appropriate outlets.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Youth and Arts Decision No: D110129MEM Date: 21st September 2011

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse Charges

(Joint report of Central Services Director and Director of Finance) (Annex)

The report presented proposed revised charges for the Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse tourist attraction for implementation from 1 April 2012. It was requested that a further review be done to ensure that there was a consistency and rationale to the proposals.

Following consideration by the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts resolved that:

1) the proposed charges for Tonbridge Castle Gatehouse, as outlined in the report, be agreed for implementation from 1 April 2012; and

2) these charges be reflected in the appropriate tourism marketing material.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board of 21 September 2011.

Signed Cabinet Member for M Heslop Leisure, Youth and Arts:

Signed Leader: M Worrall

Signed Chief Executive: D Hughes

Date of publication: 23 September 2011