

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

18 May 2010

**Report of the Chief Leisure Officer and the
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts**

Part 1- Public

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken
by the Cabinet Member)**

1 LEISURE FACILITIES – CUSTOMER PANEL MEETINGS

Summary

**This report seeks the appointment of Member representatives to attend
Customer Panel Meetings at the Council's main leisure facilities until May
2011.**

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Panels, ideally comprising approximately 10-12 customers, currently meet at a minimum twice per annum at the Council's main indoor and outdoor leisure facilities. Meetings are attended by relevant officers and two Members appointed by this Board.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the Panels is to seek views from a cross section of users on the services provided at each facility, and also to provide a "sounding board" for potential new initiatives. The Panels are also a key consultee for the annual review of charges, enabling Members to consider the views of customers when making a decision.

1.2 Future Role

- 1.2.1 The Customer Panels have played an important role in assisting leisure facilities to continue to meet the needs of users.
- 1.2.2 A range of issues of particular importance to customers have been raised and addressed which otherwise may have been overlooked. Attendance by Council Members has also enabled closer involvement in the day to day operation of the facilities.
- 1.2.3 It is felt important to maintain the role of the Customer Panels in the future and to continue to recruit new customers to ensure a wide cross-section of views are obtained.

1.3 Current Member Representation

- 1.3.1 Members were appointed at the May 2009 meeting of this Board to serve for a 12 month period as follows:

Facility	Representatives
Larkfield Leisure Centre	Councillors Brian Luker and Anita Oakley
Angel Centre	Councillors David Thornewell, Mark Rhodes, Russell Lancaster and Maria Heslop
Tonbridge Swimming Pool	Councillors Mark Rhodes and Maria Heslop
Poult Wood Golf Centre	Councillors Gordon Court and Tony Sayer
Haysden Country Park	Councillors Peter Bolt and David Cure
Leybourne Lakes Country Park	Councillors Brian Luker, Les Withey and John Clements
Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground (Panel has not met to date)	Councillors Michael MacDonald, Jean Atkinson and Vivian Branson
Tonbridge Farm Sportsground	Councillors Vivian Branson and Jean Atkinson

- 1.3.2 In addition to the above, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts was approved as an ex-officio member of each Panel.

1.4 Future Member Representation

- 1.4.1 It is felt that the Panels provide a valuable means of keeping in close liaison with facility users, and should be retained and developed in the future. It should be noted, however, that it has proved difficult to attract users to attend the panel for Tonbridge Farm Sportsground, and subsequently no further progress has been made in establishing the panel for Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground. This issue is being considered in liaison with the local Members, and it is hoped that if a Panel is not retained, an alternative established forum could be utilised. Members are invited to make nominations at the meeting.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 None.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 None.

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 None.

1.8 Policy Considerations

- 1.8.1 Communications, Customer Contact

1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 Members are **REQUESTED TO RECOMMEND** Member nominations to the Customer Panels until May 2011.

The Chief Leisure Officer confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Robert Styles

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer

Martin Coffin
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts