

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

23 May 2011

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer

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 2012.

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 2010 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	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, as the range of issues to be discussed has proved to be limited. In liaison with the existing Member representatives of this Panel it has been agreed to investigate the possibility of using other existing local forums to update local residents on developments at Tonbridge Farm Sportsground. The Customer Panel at the Racecourse Sportsground has yet to be established, pending the completion of the improvement works. It is now felt appropriate to formally establish a Panel for this facility. 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 2012.

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

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	All members of the community are able to join the Panels and attend meetings.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	As above.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.