

**Maidstone Borough Council**

**Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 15 December 2009**

**Leisure Centre**

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 On Tuesday 18 August 2009, the Environment and Leisure Overview Committee considered a reference, attached at Appendix A, from the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding Leisure Centre usage and agreed to review it at its meeting on 15 December. The relevant extract from the minutes of the meeting is as follows:

"The Chairman highlighted the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's reference to the Committee with regard to the declining footfall at the Leisure Centre. Councillor F Wilson informed the Committee that the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been concerned by this decline and recommended to the Committee that they establish why there had been a decline in footfall and what was being done to address this. She further highlighted a resident's concern with regard to the closure of the crèche due to declining uptake. The Committee agreed that this was an important piece of work and agreed to undertake a one off review at its meeting on 15 December. Members requested copies of the first and second quartile Performance indicators with regard to the Leisure Centre's footfall for 2008/09 and 2009/10, in addition to comparative data for other local authority leisure centres and Maidstone based private leisure centres."



- 1.2 At its meeting on 17 November, the Committee considered its work programme and agreed to consider the Leisure Centre item at its meeting on 19 January. The relevant extract from the draft minutes of the meeting is as follows:

"Members felt that the 15 December 2009 meeting of the Committee was too busy to give each item a fair hearing and therefore agreed to move the "Litter Enforcement" and "Leisure Centre" items to the 19 January 2010 meeting."

- 1.3 However, following this meeting, the decision on the Best Value Review Implementation Plan was delayed by a month and will be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 19 January. The Committee will therefore consider the Leisure Centre item at its meeting on 15 December.
- 1.4 The Assistant Director of Environmental Services, Steve Goulette and the Parks and Open Spaces Officer, Jason Taylor will be in attendance at the meeting to discuss Leisure Centre Usage.

## 2. Leisure Centre Usage

2.1 The performance against the Key Performance Indicators relating to the Leisure Centre for Quartiles One and Two are shown below.

PI Ref	Indicator Description	2008/09 Out-turn	Q1 Actual	Q2 Actual	Year to Date Target	Year to Date Actual	Target 2009/10	Projection 2009/10	Responsible Officer	Traffic Light
<u>L</u> <u>11</u>	Number of users at the leisure centre	578,201	158,949	153,813	285,000	312,762	570,000	520,000	Jason Taylor	
<p>There has been a 3% increase in performance compared to the same period last year. This trend, however, is not expected to continue with the lagoon pool closing from November to February for refurbishment. At this stage the annual target of 570,000 is not expected to be achieved. This indicator will provide measurement post refurbishment to assess if usage has increased.</p>										
<u>L</u> <u>12</u>	Satisfaction with the leisure centre	43%	N/A	66%	45%	66%	45%	60%	Jason Taylor	
<p>The new survey is now in place at the leisure centre but there is lower participation than expected. The contractor is required to carry out an annual survey of 300 customers therefore data that is more reflective of the satisfaction levels at the leisure centre should be available for the end of year reporting. In the mean time options are being looked into on how customers can be encouraged to complete the surveys. It should be noted that the scheduled closure of the lagoon pool could also impact on this indicator.</p>										

2.2 The tables below show the number of admissions to Maidstone Leisure Centre. A monthly breakdown of these admissions is attached at Appendix B.

	Financial Year to date			Rolling Year to date		
	2008	2009	Change	2007/08	2009/10	Change
<b>Total Admissions</b>	19008	71386	276%	31497	82602	162%
<b>Parties</b>	6740	10195	51%	12070	15265	26%
<b>Workout Classes</b>	15648	13271	-15%	26960	24237	-10%
<b>Total Swim Lesson</b>	35070	31347	-11%	62816	57349	-9%
<b>Crèche</b>	783	279	-64%	1382	685	-50%
<b>Total Dryside</b>	31919	23279	-27%	54047	45320	-16%
<b>Total Gym</b>	38770	29114	-25%	69386	44268	-36%
<b>Total Polar</b>	9663	8008	-17%	17271	14763	-15%
<b>Total Wetside</b>	109378	97133	-11%	168649	148195	-12%
<b>Total Events</b>	31023	28720	-7%	58848	52630	-11%
<b>Clubs</b>	32763	25569	-22%	57123	50202	-12%
<b>Total Schools</b>	25623	20317	-21%	53763	44915	-16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>356388</b>	<b>358618</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>613812</b>	<b>580431</b>	<b>-5%</b>

The Leisure Monitoring Officer explained that:

“Total Admissions includes Gym Tours (i.e prospective new members being shown around), Parent admissions for Childrens Parties, and Non-descript admissions (e.g if someone comes to look at the facilities, uses the toilet etc)

Dryside includes all sports usage in Mote Hall, Rugby and Football usage in Mote Park, Training Courses held on site, Maestros (over 50’s classes), Holiday Club (child and parents) and the Leisure Centre’s 5 a side league.

Wetside includes Early Risers Swimmers, Pool Members/Swiped members specifically going swimming, Wave Rave users, and casual swimmers (e.g Non Members)”

2.3 Members requested comparative data from other local authority leisure centres and Maidstone-based private leisure centres. Unfortunately, the response to requests for this data from other local authorities and private leisure centres has been minimal, with only one response received. Any additional data received will be circulated to Members as and when it is provided.

2.4 Ashford Borough Council supplied the following information regarding its annual Leisure Centre usage figures:

October 07 to September 08 = 508,068 visitors  
October 08 to September 09 = 509,334 visitors

This shows a 0.25% increase in leisure centre usage.

### **3. Recommendation**

3.1 Members are recommended to consider the comments of Mr Goulette and Mr Taylor with regard to leisure centre usage and make recommendations as they see fit.

3.2 Members are reminded that “Quality Recommendations” are those that adhere to the following categories:

- Recommendations that affect and make a difference to local people;
- Recommendations that result in a change in policy that improves services;
- Recommendations that identify savings and maintain/improve service quality; or
- Recommendations that objectively identify a solution.

## Maidstone Borough Council


### Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday 18 August 2009**

#### Reference from the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### 1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 4 August 2009, Members considered a report with regard to the Quarter 1 Performance Report.
- 1.2 Members were concerned that the number of users at the Leisure Centre was below target and felt that the reasons for this needed to be investigated.
- 1.3 The relevant performance information is as follows:

Performance Indicator Description	Out-turn 2008/09	Q1 Target	Q1 Actual	Target 2009/10	Projection 2009/10	Traffic Light
Number of users at the Leisure Centre	578,201	162,901	<b>158,949</b>	570,000	520,000	

The leisure centre usage has continued to decline. The proposed improvement works are scheduled to take place later this year and should result in increased visitor numbers, but the closure required to undertake the work means the end of year target will probably not be met.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 August 2009, the Committee resolved:

"A reference be sent to the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee highlighting the decline in footfall at the Leisure Centre and noting the Committee's concern about this".