

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE
ON THURSDAY 28th MARCH 2024

PRESENT: COUN K HAWLEY (CHAIR)
D Hawley, D Howarth, R Scott, R Burnip, and R Moore

16. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were offered from Councillors A Laing and M McCue. **RESOLVED That the apologies be noted.**

17. The Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 15th March 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting were attached for consideration and approval as a true and correct record. **RESOLVED the minutes be accepted and signed as a true record.**

18. The Pavilion, Helford Road

Members discussed in detail their ideas for the purpose of the building and its services moving forward.

It was noted that at a recent engagement event, young people had commented that they were unaware of the Pavilion until the event. They thought the decoration was bland and uninviting for young people. The Sport and Wellbeing Manager would give full feedback at a future meeting.

Members were of the opinion that:-

- Young people had done some impressive artwork on walls at the College which had made it more welcoming to young people. It was suggested that the same could be done at the Pavilion.
- Bench tables in the Bistro did not work as some users did not want to share a table. These arrangements were not conducive to private discussions.
- Previous changes to the pavilion were undertaken without sufficient consultation.
- There was confusion around the pricing of room hire with different rates seemingly being applied. Charges needed to be easily understood and transparent.
- Hire charges were prohibitive for smaller groups.

- Discounted room hire rates should be offered to attract new users. It was suggested that new community groups (i.e. not for profit groups) could be offered six months hire free of charge. Businesses could be offered a 50% discount for new bookings for 6 months. The success of the concessions could be reviewed 6 months after implementation.
- Concessionary pricing scheme worked well for the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area), but use had fallen when the scheme ended. It was suggested that this could be tried again. The Acting Town Clerk commented that the cost of MUGA's in other areas was being sought to be able to compare cost and usage.

Discussion took place with regard to the Bistro. Whilst concerns were expressed relating to the current offer, it was agreed to continue to implement the recently agreed changes and a review take place when the impact of the discounted room hire charges could be undertaken.

The Acting Town Clerk gave an update regarding previously agreed actions.

- The Council's new website would shortly be live which provide an opportunity to better advertise the facilities and charges.
- Sport England had been contacted with regard to potential implications if an area of the Pavilion was used by another organisation by way of a lease or partnering arrangement.
- There was currently only one booking to run a paid for class at the Pavillion.
- The Cricket Club had been invited to the next Council meeting to present a proposal.

RECOMMENDED

1. That concessionary fees be applied to new room bookings for a 6 month trial period as follows:-
 - Community Groups (i.e. not for profit groups) be offered the first 6 months free of charge.
 - Businesses be offered 50% discount for the first 6 months.
2. That the College be approached to see if students could do artwork on walls in the lobby area.
3. That a comparison of costs of local MUGA's be undertaken.

19. Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on Thursday, 11th April 2024. An update on Shotton Hall would be given at this meeting.