

## **EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE TRUST BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 6 MARCH 2017 AT 1800 HOURS IN THE INGRAM ROOM, PALACE THEATRE, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Douglas Reid and Hugh Ross; Independent Trustees Robin Hume, Jackie Livingston and Jean Brown; and Chris McAleavey, Depute Chief Executive: Safer Communities and Joe McLachlan, Corporate Accounting Manager, both East Ayrshire Council, ex officio Trustees.

**ATTENDING:** John Griffiths, Chief Executive; Anneke Freel, Countryside Services Manager Adam Geary, Cultural Services Manager; Jackie Biggart, People and Finance Manager; Chris Murphy, Sport and Community Venues Manager; Lorraine Russell, Senior Accountant, all East Ayrshire Leisure Trust; and Gillian Hamilton, Democratic Services Officer, East Ayrshire Council.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Eoghann MacColl, Iain Linton and Neil McGhee; and Independent Trustees Elizabeth Young, Robert Mann and June Minnery.

**CHAIR:** Councillor Douglas Reid (Chair).

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. Independent Trustee Robin Hume declared a non-financial interest in Item 6 below, which he did not consider significant, and accordingly remained and participated in consideration and determination of this item.

#### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

##### **2.1 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 29 November 2016**

There were submitted and approved as a correct record the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 29 November 2016 (circulated).

##### **2.2 Matters Arising**

It was noted:

- (i) documentation was being finalised for the catering contract for Dean Castle Country Park to be issued for tender in April; and
- (ii) any proposals for bringing The Jougs back into use would be considered as part of the Trust's future Action Plan.

#### **MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

3. There were submitted and noted the Minutes of the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee Meeting held on 13 February 2017 (circulated).

##### **3.1 Matter Arising**

Trustees welcomed the progress made with the Staff Recognition Awards Scheme.

#### **PERFORMANCE REPORT OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2016**

4. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2017 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which provided the Board with a summary of the performance of Trust services for the period

October to December 2016 and highlighted significant aspects of performance for Trustees' consideration.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the East Ayrshire Leisure Performance report for October to December 2016;
- (ii) to note the significant progress made towards the achievement of Action Plan objectives in the East Ayrshire Leisure Performs report, particularly in relation to maintaining attendance figures. By comparison, the EPMS Performance Scorecard indicated that action was required in relation to overall attendances at Sport and Community Venues. The difference between the two reports was attributed to profiling. The EPMS Scorecard was to be changed at the end of the year and it was anticipated that the new arrangement would improve profiling and consistency of performance reporting;
- (iii) to note that this year's pantomime had received good reviews and experienced an upturn in income. The future direction of the pantomime was being looked at, including different delivery models and associated costs;
- (iv) to note the work taking place with Willowbank School to develop an outdoor learning area within Dean Castle Country Park, specifically adapted for mixed ability needs. A funding application of £2,000 submitted to Greggs Foundation for this project had been unsuccessful, however other funding options were being explored;
- (v) to note the update on Annanhill Golf Course. It was confirmed that no tree felling was taking place at the Golf Course. Meetings had been held with prospective contractors for the sewer pipe contract. Priority was to be given to protecting the Golf Course during the works period. Clubs were being kept updated on progress;
- (vi) to note that a financial surplus of £71,750 was currently projected and it was envisaged that this amount, together with unallocated reserves, would be utilised to assist in the management of the £141,090 2016/17 budget savings yet to be identified;
- (vii) to note that the savings identified in the report, which contributed to the above financial surplus, were non-recurring;
- (viii) to note that Golf had transferred to and was now being reported under Countryside Services;
- (ix) to note that recruitment was taking place for the Irvine Valley Trails Project Officer post;
- (x) to note the possibility of underspend in European Funding Programmes being released for bids;
- (xi) to note that the £200,000 application to Ayrshire Leader for Dean Castle Country Park had been unsuccessful, the support for the project going forward and that any opportunities to attract external funding should be pursued;
- (xii) to note in the Performance Scorecard the attendances and income lost in 2015/16 due to the cancellation of a large-scale dance event. The customer was still using facilities and future events could be accommodated. Officers were continuing to develop and promote facilities to maintain attendance levels;
- (xiii) to note that an updated Risk Register developed through discussions with Trustees at the session held on 26 October 2016 would be utilised from April 2017 onwards; and

- (xiv) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

### **2017/18 BUDGET SAVINGS**

5. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2017 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which put forward savings proposals for the 2017/18 budget to meet the target of £293,000 agreed with East Ayrshire Council, for Trustees' consideration and approval.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to approve the savings proposals for 2017/18 in the report;
- (ii) to note that some of the 2017/18 savings proposals could be implemented on 1 April 2017 and others requiring further detailed work would be brought to the Board meeting in June for implementation on 1 October 2017;
- (iii) to note that the total savings of £1,056,000 required by 2021/22 would be considered at the special Board meeting to be held on 16 March 2017;
- (iv) to note that the targets in the Business Plan would require another look in light of the significant reduction in resources; and
- (v) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

### **2017/18 CHARGES FOR SERVICES**

6. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2017 (circulated) by the Chief Executive which put forward proposals for charges for services for 2017/18.

Discussion took place around:-

- (i) early marketing taking place to promote the new residential centre at Dean Castle Country Park with some bookings already confirmed;
- (ii) the proposal to remove club discounts for use of sport facilities, with all hirers to be charged the standard amount for hires. It was confirmed that the proposed charges compared favourably with those in North and South Ayrshire. Concerns were expressed about affordability and the potential impact on club members. A comparison could be undertaken in due course to identify any drop off in membership of Sports Council affiliated clubs. A matrix of assistance was available to clubs and the Sports Council could provide information and advice, including ideas for fund-raising;
- (iii) the East Ayrshire Youth Theatre which currently delivered a high quality learning experience supported by public performances, and the intention to write to current users to determine likely demand under the proposed new charging model to be introduced for the June season. If there was insufficient demand at this new level then the Trust would look to withdraw the service in its current format from June onwards. It was confirmed that the timescale for receiving feedback from users was realistic and achievable and that alternative delivery models would be looked at in the event that the Youth Theatre could not continue in its existing format. Again, concerns were expressed about affordability and the potential to lose business in an area where there was a high level of deprivation. It was confirmed that there was provision to look after people where affordability was an issue. The risk of losing business had to be balanced against available resources. Savings had been identified and the balance of efficiencies had to come from income. Benchmarking with other Youth Theatres was problematic as they were all different and it was not possible to compare like with like;

- (iv) more proactive promotion to determine what users want in facilities. It was confirmed that there had been a Trust presence at parents' evenings and consultation was taking place within sports hubs.

It agreed:-

- (i) to approve the schedule of charges attached as Appendix I to the report, with the exception of the removal of sports club discount and proposals for the East Ayrshire Youth Theatre;
- (ii) to continue consideration of the above exceptions at the special Board meeting to be held on 16 March 2017, Trustees to be provided in the interim with more information on these proposals; and
- (iii) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

### **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**7.** Performance & Audit Sub-Committee: 22 May 2017

Trust Board: 6 June 2017

The meeting terminated at 1900 hours.