

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

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 6PM HOURS AT THE DICK INSTITUTE, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Clare Maitland; Graham Boyd; Linda Holland; Iain Linton; and James Adams, Trustees; David Ross; Rob Hannah; Barbara McIntyre; and Andy Wilson, Independent Trustees; Blair Millar, Head of Housing and Communities, East Ayrshire Council, ex officio Trustee

**ATTENDING:** Anneke Freel, Chief Officer; Jackie Biggart, Executive Lead: People, Policy & Performance; Paul Mathieson, Executive Lead: Places, Projects & Programmes; Lorraine Russell, Strategic Lead: Creating a Solid Foundation for Growth; Carleen Fitzgerald, Development Officer: Organisational Administration; all East Ayrshire Leisure Trust

**CHAIR:** Councillor Clare Maitland, Trustee

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1. Jim Roberts, Melanie Swan, Independent Trustees; and Joe McLachlan, Chief Financial Officer and Head of Finance and ICT, East Ayrshire Council ex officio Trustee

#### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2. No declarations of interest were intimated.

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

- 3.1 There were submitted and approved the minutes of the previous Board meeting held on 28 November 2023 (circulated).

#### **MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE OF 6 FEBRUARY 2024**

- 3.2 There were submitted and noted the minutes of the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 February 2024 (circulated).

#### **PERFORMANCE REPORT OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2023 (Q3)**

4. There was submitted a report dated 7 February 2024 (circulated) by the Chief Officer which provided details of the Trust's performance for the period October - December 2023, the third quarter of the 2023/24 financial year. In line with the organisational review, Strategic Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan, the performance report has been separated into 3 documents: East Ayrshire Leisure Performs; Corporate Delivery Plan Record of Progress; and Financial Performance.

During discussion on the report, the following was noted:

- The report was approved by the Performance and Audit Sub-Committee on 6 February 2024.
- Attendance for the period was 529,793 which is an increase by 25% compared to the same period in 2022/23.

- Leisure at the Heart team exceeding attendance figures with an overall increase of 25% compared to same period in 2022/23.
- Book borrowing continues to grow, 35,399 physical and 7,205 e-books borrowed. Will look into bringing paper copies of newspapers back which may help to increase footfall. Audio books are monitored separately, will break down to show figures in future report.
- Small adverse variance of £26k. Indoor hall hire showing income shortfall, being monitored and working on solutions.
- Chair thanked the finance team for work done this financial year so far.
- Box Office and Ticketing system has been successfully procured with Spektrix. Will be rolled out 1 May, including staff training, new seating plans and necessary equipment installed within buildings.
- Near finalising procurement of the Leisure Management system, will be rolled out for 1 July. Trust App will also be introduced.
- Demonstrations of the new systems will be offered to Trustees before they go live.
- Marie Curie is currently our nominated charity for 2023/24. At its meeting on 6 February 2024, the Performance & Audit Sub-Committee approved the Trust's charity for 2024/25 as Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH). They provide services across Scotland for any mental health concerns. This was the Trust's preferred option as a third of staff absences relates to stress, and the Trust are looking to enhance our Wellbeing & Support campaigns and strategies for our staff.

It was agreed:-

- to note the East Ayrshire Leisure Performs report for the period October – December 2023;
- otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

### **TRUST BUDGET 2024/25**

- There was submitted a report dated 7 February 2024 (circulated) by the Chief Officer which confirms the Trust's budget position for 2024/25 and shows how the savings target of £181,000 will be achieved.

During discussion on the report, the following was noted:

- It is proposed that the saving requirement is temporarily funded from the Trust's reserves.
- A growth action plan for the Trust is currently under development, exploring commercial/income generation.

It was agreed:-

- to approve the budget position shown in this report; and
- otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

### **CHARGES FOR SERVICES 2024/25**

- There was submitted a report dated 7 February 2024 (circulated) by the Chief Officer which puts forward proposals for the 2024/25 schedule of charges for Trustee consideration and approval.

During discussion on the report, the following was noted:

- Booking fee of £2 per transaction will not change for the foreseeable future, will review once the new ticketing system is in place later this year.
- Flexible Space – proposing Standard Hall hire rate of £15p/h and Large Hall hire £17p/h. Hires out with normal hours will be £20p/h with minimum booking of 3 hrs, and £30p/h after midnight. Risk Impact Assessment has been carried out with users, these charges will be implemented in June which will allow us time to discuss the process with user groups. This will help the Trust with income targets for flexible spaces and streamlining the process for our staff to administer.
- Performing Rights Society/Phonographic Performance Limited (PRS/PPL) – charges will continue to be passed to the hirer.
- It was agreed to continue with the £5 per month gym membership and £50 golf season ticket for staff. Gym membership for volunteers will be introduced at the corporate rate of £18 per month.
- Hospitality – small increases will be implemented due to the increasing costs of bar and catering provision.
- Customer Loyalty – fitness memberships and subscription customers are now able to freeze their membership for up to 3 months on medical grounds.
- Loyalty Discounts for regular bookings and clubs affiliated to East Ayrshire Sports Council will continue.
- Participants who pay monthly Direct Debits for Coaching and Swimming lessons will still be eligible for 10% discount on parties booked with the Trust, free public swimming and access to the running tracks during public sessions.

It was agreed:

- (i) to approve the proposed charges; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

## **LEISURE FACILITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

7. The Chief Officer took Trustees through a presentation providing an update on the Leisure Facility Strategy.

During discussion on the report, the following was noted:

- On 14 September 2021, the Trust Board approved the Leisure Facility Strategy for 2022-30.
- The Strategy for 2022-24 saw the refurb and modernisation of Dean Castle, Morton Hall, Annanhill GC, and expanded sports offering at Hunter Fitness Suite.
- Within the 2024-26 Strategy, highlights will be: Kilmarnock Infinity Loop; DCCP resurfacing works; updating of signage throughout Trust venues; development of a Regional Sports Park Masterplan at Ayrshire Athletics Arena and Scott Ellis; outdoor track at Rose Reilly; and improvements to Merlin Park, Auchinleck.
- Total costs to date and projected to end of 2026 is £71.9m, excluding Barony Sports Village, Doon Valley and William McIlvanney Leisure Centres.
- East Ayrshire Council Capital Programme have invested £17.1m
- Secured external funding of £47.75m. Funding still to be secured is £5.05m. Additional funding is required to enhance the Cultural Kilmarnock Project.
- The Chief Officer confirmed that there are plans for a practice area at Annanhill.
- Merlin Park, Auchinleck requires works to drainage. Design work, site investigations etc. will be carried out prior to pitch being used.

- Regional Sports Park Masterplan for Ayrshire Athletics Arena and Scott Ellis – site to be developed to be suitable for national programming with outdoor spectator seating area which will hold 250 - 500, and integrated outdoor wifi for judges box installed. Will discuss and plan with national bodies and user groups. Once masterplan is developed, the Trust will seek funding to progress with the works.

### **CORPROATE DELIVERY PLAN 2024-26**

8. There was submitted a report dated 9 February 2024 (circulated) by the Chief Officer that presents Trustees with the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-26, which sets out the Trust's direction and priorities for the 2 year period.

It was agreed:

- (i) to approve the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-26; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

### **CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2024-26, OUTPUT 35: EAST AYRSHIRE LEISURE GROWTH PLAN**

9. The Chief Officer took Trustees through a presentation providing an update on the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-26, Output 35 - develop, implement, monitor and evaluate identified actions outlines within the East Ayrshire Leisure Growth Plan.

During discussion on the report, the following was noted:

- A Growth Action Plan for the Trust is currently under development. The Trust is developing a business plan for a Social Enterprise Model where profit through gift aid will go to the Trust to reinvest in services.
- Could potentially change our rates/VAT therefore seeking advice and support from internal/external auditors and colleagues in Legal. These plans will tie in with the new organisational rebrand.
- East Ayrshire Council are currently carrying out a Leisure Services Review of East Ayrshire, making sure there are no duplications throughout communities etc.
- Trustees to advise the Chief Officer of any ideas they think the Trust should explore.
- It was suggested that the Trust look into doing a Lottery, laws around gambling would need to be explored.
- Trust could also look into having a Tourist/Gift shop selling merchandise at the Palace Theatre once venue reopens.

### **SEVERANCE REPORT**

10. There was submitted a report dated 5 February 2024 (circulated) by the Chief Officer that seeks Board's approval of a severance application on the grounds of redundancy in respect of an employee with East Ayrshire Leisure.

It was agreed:

- (i) to approve the severance application detailed in paragraph 3 of the report; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of the report.

## **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

- 11.** Councillor Iain Linton advised that his Father in law recently celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, and raised over £1,400 in donations for EA Woodlands to plant trees and improve areas throughout Darvel.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 12.** Performance & Audit Sub-Committee – 14 May 2024  
East Ayrshire Leisure Board of Trustees – 28 May 2024

The meeting terminated at 19.20 hours.