

Cllr T Ojetola

Outside Body Report - Impulse Leisure (IL) For Full Council Meeting of 26 October 2016

To provide members an update about the work of IL

The Council representatives are Cllr Tunde Ojetola (8 years) and Cllr Joy Redsell (6 months)

Headlines:

There was a good meeting between the Council and Impulse Leisure in September. I am pleased that the Leader has taken an interest in the on-going issues and has asked for monthly updates.

The key headlines include:

- Belhus Park -£1.2m will be spent by the council to repair the park and there will be an improved reception area before Christmas.
- The priority is to repair the boiler which the council has agreed to do this.
- TCL half year position is positive with about £106,000 gross income. This is above its target as the business has grown.
- Swimming has for up for the first time in a few years.
- Its had a complete sell out of Jimmy Carr shows.
- It has reduced staff cost to 46% of income (best so far), despite staff turnover challenges, mainly due to lifestyle changes and proximity to London. IL have tried to retain staff by staff performance related pay increases.
- The council has agreed to replace heating pipe work.

Detailed information

IL is a registered charity that operates the Council's Leisure Service since the year 2000. It has a 30 year lease for:

1. Blackshots Leisure Centre (including the Civic Hall),
2. Corringham Leisure Centre, and
3. Belhus Park Leisure Centre and Golf Course (including the land).

Thurrock Council (TC) has landlord responsibility to maintain the fabric of the buildings whereas IL has responsibility to service and maintain and decorate internal areas.

As a charity profit generated is reinvested back into the service. This amounts to about £9,000,000 over the last 16 years.

IL operates an ageing stock of facilities which are over 40 years (Belhus Park and Corringham) and 55 years old (Blackshots and the Civic Hall).

Between 2000 and 2016, IL has invested over £9,000,000 in the facilities for the benefit of the community and TC.

Regular equipment upgrade and renewal has occurred ensuring the latest and best technology is available to the community.

IL has developed a comprehensive range of community and outreach work, which alongside the normal operation improves the health and wellbeing of more people in the local communities by getting them more physically active.

In the last 18 months alone, IL has - invested a lot in the facilities and calls on the Council to invest on the fabric of the buildings to help reduce closures and the impact this will have on users.

Issues

IL is waiting on the council to deliver a number of issues:

- comply with any long term grant funding arrangements ever made
- sufficiently resource its landlord obligations
- implement resources that are allocated
- Act on the car park issues at Blackshots
- Have a short, medium and long term for future

Next steps

- The Council need to have a commitment and coordinated and planned approach to IL
- ***A commitment*** to fund landlord obligations at least until 2029 (estimated at £5,000,000 including £1,200,000 already committed to Belhus Park)
- A senior member of staff allocated to Leisure, reporting at the top of TC therefore able to make decisions and ensure TC are aware of the current and future issues
- An involved and committed portfolio holder.