

REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 DECEMBER 2016

MEMBER'S ITEM: SPLASHES LEISURE POOL

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director of Regeneration, Culture Environment and Transformation

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Summary

This report sets out a response to an issue, raised by Councillor Stamp, concerning Splashes Leisure Pool

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 Under Medway Constitution Overview and Scrutiny rules (Chapter 4, Part 5, Paragraph 9.1) Councillor Stamp has requested that an item on this matter is included on the agenda for this meeting.

2. The Issue

2.1. Councillor Stamp has requested that an item be placed on the agenda and the reasons are set out as follows:

'I would like an item to be placed on the agenda for the December meeting of the Regeneration, Community and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the recent outbreak of the Norovirus at Splashes Leisure Pool.

This appears to be a large-scale failing in terms of cleanliness and hygiene, and as Councillors we have a duty to ensure that public health is protected at all times.

I would like a report to explain what happened, what went wrong, whether anyone was at fault, and what can be done to ensure this does not happen again in the future - at Splashes or any of our other swimming pools.

This report should also be in the wider context of the £1 million cuts to Leisure Services which Medway Council is making over 3 years. We've already had a £350,000 cut during 2016/7, with opening hours slashed and staff numbers reduced at our Leisure Centres. **What will be the impact of the further planned cuts over the next two years? What form will those cuts take? How can public safety be safeguarded?**

The Year 1 cuts have clearly led to staff being overstretched across all of our Leisure Centres (we now have no receptionists at Medway Park, for example, and there are no longer trained external instructors for the classes provided).

Here are some of the questions I have specifically in relation to our swimming pools, which hopefully the members item will help to answer:-

- What training do staff have? Is it adequate to protect the health and safety of the public? Could it be improved?
- Who is responsible for cleaning?
- What procedures are in place to ensure cleansing standards are maintained?
- Are there emergency/incident response procedures in place in the event of a hygiene issue being discovered?
- If so, what are they and were they implemented at Splashes on this occasion?
- Were the chlorine doses reduced for the purposes of dyeing the pool red on 28 October? Was this appropriate? Was the dose sufficient to protect the public using the pool?
- What managerial oversight is there on a day-to-day basis at Splashes and our other Leisure Centres?
- What is staff morale like? And staff turnover? Are they temporary or permanent staff? Are there enough staff?

It would also be helpful to have input from partner agencies, in particular Public Health England, and information regarding the outcome of their investigations'.

3 Director's comments

- 3.1 Medway Council has been working with colleagues at Public Health England (PHE) to investigate complaints of sickness from customers visiting Splashes Sports Centre on 28 October 2016.
- 3.2 PHE is currently analysing information supplied by customers and hopes to be able to provide its report to the Council later this month. Once this has been received a full report will be brought before Members at the earliest available Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 The Member requesting that this item be included on the agenda is aware of the above information and has asked that this item be included on this

agenda for information with any discussion to take place once the outcome of the investigation is known.

4 Risk Management

- 4.1 This section will be completed when the report is submitted to the Committee once the outcome of the investigation is known.

5. Financial and Legal Implications

- 5.1 At present there is no information upon which to determine how the virus outbreak occurred. Results of the investigation are awaited and will be submitted to the Committee for discussion when the results are known.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 The Committee is requested to note that a further report will be submitted to the Committee when the outcome of the Public Health England investigation is known.

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Appendices

None

Background Papers

None