

**NOTES OF THE MEETING OF PONTELAND STAKEHOLDER GROUP HELD ON 16 MARCH 2015 AT 2PM
AT THE LEISURE CENTRE**

PRESENT

Users: Jackie Axelby, Anne Cowan, Sylvia Rowlands

Club Reps : Trevor Angus, Alan Birkinshaw, John Chappell, Jean Croft

Residents Association : Norman McFarlane

NCC: Richard Dodd (in the chair)

Town Council : Sue Johnson

Active Northumberland : Leanne Beattie, Richard Calvert, Maureen Dixon, Phil Evans, Bruce Ledger

APOLOGIES

Peter Sowler, Liz Thompson

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Richard Dodd welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. RC explained the main items were to hear reports from the meetings between Richard Calvert and the Clubs and User Group, and to receive an update from Bruce Ledger about NCC's plans.

2 NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 December 2014

The notes were agreed as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Steps into the Pool- the age of the pool had made finding suitable steps difficult. A customised solution had been agreed and an order placed. Fixing still had to be organised. This would not require pool closure.

Pool temperature- inconsistent temperature problems continue, although not as bad of late following some improvement work. Maureen Dixon reported NCC was still working on this.

4 REPORT ON MEETINGS

RC reported that he had met all the Clubs except the Badminton Club, and the User Group. He had gleaned useful information and was getting to know people, learn about the partnerships and what was going on at the Centre etc.

User Group –Jackie Axelby reported that a good meeting had been held on 21 January 2015 with RC. The Group had highlighted the key issues that are important to users of the gym, Studio, Main Hall, pool and the various classes. Some issues were of long-standing e.g hooks and locks on cubicle doors poolside. The Group had offered suggestions for the future and had stressed its wish to continue to work constructively with management. There were early indications of improvement since Active Northumberland had taken over.

Football- Alan Birkinshaw reported on the issues the Club had raised including the problems with flooding, the work that would soon need to be done in the close season and seeding of the back fields. Leanne Beattie said she would get a date for this work and let AB know.

Rugby- John Chappell commented that the long-standing issue with the cubicle door was still not resolved. RC had hoped it would have been resolved by now. There were issues about grounds maintenance that he needed to discuss with RC. RC added that he had met with the NCC Grounds Maintenance team re a programme of work for the next few months and he would share that information as soon as he received it.

Archery- Jean Croft reported she had informed RC of some long-standing problems, in particular that the Club had been rendered homeless last year, which was a major issue.

Residents Association- Norman McFarlane reported parking was not as much of a problem recently. BL added that the NCC Parking Wardens could be utilised if problems resumed. Litter was still a problem and dogs were still being walked on the pitches. There had been some abuse from dog owners when challenged. NMCF congratulated management on fixing the fence.

5 NCC's PLANS FOR THE LEISURE CENTRE

Bruce Ledger explained that NCC has plans to improve education and leisure facilities in Ponteland and elsewhere in the county as part of a county-wide review of facilities and services. An officer working group has been set up and design proposals are required by the end of this calendar year. He re-iterated that £10m has been set aside in the budgets for 2015/16 and 2016/17 for the re-provision of schools and leisure centres in Ponteland and Morpeth. The earliest timescale for development to commence would be 2017/18, with a 3 to 5 year project timescale likely. Assurance was given that existing facilities would not close until new facilities were ready for use.

BL said he wished to obtain views from the outside clubs about options for re-provision. It was understood there were many and varied views from a range of interested parties about the re-provision issue, alternative use of the sites and the potential implications of other planning applications currently in hand. Statutory requirements would have to be met and public consultation would be undertaken.

BL informed the Group that membership charges across the county were being reviewed by AN as there is currently great disparity across the county. The aim was to create a headline price for full membership, likely to be £40 per month and a single site charge likely to be £29. The new pricing structure would commence 1 May 2015.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

RD reported that Jackie Axelby had been invited to join the board of Active Northumberland.

RC said he was keen to build on the early work to build relationships with the Clubs and Users and he encouraged everyone to pass on any comments, positive or negative, to himself or Phil Evans.

BL said he was addressing the staffing structure.

AB reported on his involvement with the Northumberland Football Association and the opportunities for improvements. The 3G artificial pitch was now in use with positive feedback from users.

7 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed the next meeting would be arranged for September/ October 2015, when it was hoped more information about NCC's plans would be available. An earlier meeting could be arranged if information was available sooner.

Jackie Axelby

22 March 2015