

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 12TH DECEMBER 2023**

PRESENT –

Councillor C. Church (Chair)

Councillors

*S. Ahmed
D. Cockburn-Price
D. Gallear
S. Land
K. McGladdery
M. Stone
Y. Tennant*

Also in attendance

<i>Councillor M. Hanif</i>	<i>Executive Member for Leisure Services</i>
<i>Councillor Z. Ali</i>	<i>Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change</i>
<i>Alison Goode</i>	<i>Pendle Leisure Trust</i>
<i>Jason Whittaker</i>	<i>Pendle Leisure Trust</i>
<i>David McHendry</i>	<i>Knight, Kavanagh and Page</i>
<i>George Sutcliffe</i>	<i>Strategic Leisure Limited</i>
<i>Rachel Fowler</i>	<i>Strategic Leisure Limited</i>

Officers in attendance

<i>Phillip Spurr</i>	<i>Director of Place</i>
<i>Sarah Astin-Wood</i>	<i>Head of Policy and Commissioning</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Democratic Services Manager</i>
<i>Cath Buckley</i>	<i>Centre for Governance and Scrutiny</i>
<i>Lynne Rowland</i>	<i>Committee Administrator</i>

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15. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded of the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct concerning the declaration of interests.

16. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

18. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED

That in pursuance of the power contained in Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the next item of business when it was likely, in view of the nature of the proceedings or the business to be transacted, that there would be disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

19. STRATEGIC LEISURE REVIEW

The Director of Place submitted a report which provided background information on the strategic leisure review.

The review had commenced in 2021 and had been commissioned as a result of requirements from Sport England in relation to being able to apply to them for funding. The review was delivered by leisure specialist Max Associates and concluded that either a one-centre or two-centre model would be appropriate for Pendle. Given the geographic spread of the borough, it was felt that a two-centre model would be the most appropriate.

As a result, Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) had been commissioned by Pendle Leisure Trust to look at the feasibility of a two-centre model. The study concluded that the Council should move to two sites through refurbishing and retrofitting West Craven Leisure Centre in Barnoldswick (with stronger links with health provision) and replacing Pendle Wavelengths in Nelson, and Pendle Leisure Centre in Colne, with a wholly new eco-centre on a new site at Seedhill Athletics Track.

Following consideration of a report on the review at its July 2023 meeting, the Executive asked for a further review to be undertaken. The scope of the review was to examine how the three leisure facilities in Colne, Nelson and West Craven could be made financially viable through retrofitting and renewal; to consider the mix of features taking affordability into account; and to consider operating models for the future. The Executive expressed a commitment to retaining three accessible leisure facilities in these three areas.

A consultancy team, led by Alliance Leisure, had been appointed to undertake this review.

At the request of this Committee, a report on the latest review was submitted for consideration. The Committee was invited to comment on the findings, compare these with the findings of the feasibility study carried out by KKP and make recommendations to the Executive.

Prior to discussion, the Committee received presentations from David McHendry of KKP, and George Sutcliffe of Strategic Leisure Limited (who had been working as part of the overall Alliance Leisure Team).

A question-and-answer session followed the conclusion of both presentations during which further details were provided by the two consultants and the representatives of Pendle Leisure Trust. A discussion was held on various elements, including –

- the robustness of the consultation
- the way in which the facilities were currently used
- the proposal for future leisure facilities/activities and the target audience

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- current usage numbers and the assumptions made with future forecasts
- comparisons with other areas of a similar demographic to Pendle/case studies
- co-location/dual use centres
- access to public transport
- the financial aspects of each option
- the Passivhaus energy efficiency standard and the particular challenges associated with retrofitting the current centres
- opportunities for accessing grant funding

On hearing all the evidence presented and information provided during the discussion, the Committee concluded that it would not be financially viable or sustainable to refurbish the three leisure facilities in Colne, Nelson and West Craven and that alternative options should be explored.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive be recommended -

- (i) to note that the findings of the review indicate that the retrofitting and renewal of the three leisure facilities in Colne, Nelson and West Craven would not be financially viable;
- (ii) not to pursue the three-centre option and to instead consider other options that are affordable and sustainable;
- (iii) to defer consideration of future operating models until a decision has been reached on the long-term future of the three facilities.

CHAIR _____