

**Minutes of the Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee
3 June 2025**

Present:

Councillor S.M. Doran (Chair)
Councillor M.M. Attewell (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:

M. Arnold	M. Bing Dong	S.A. Dunn
C. Bateson	M. Buck	K.M. Grant

Substitutions: Councillor M. Beecher (in Place of A.Gale)

Apologies: Councillors J.R. Boughtflower, R. Chandler and A. Gale

29/25 Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 11 March 2025 and 22 April 2025 were agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

30/25 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

31/25 Questions from members of the Public

There were none.

32/25 Forward Plan

The Committee noted the Forward Plan.

33/25 Leisure Operating Contract: Review of first 6 Months

The Strategic Lead, Leisure introduced the report which reviewed the first six months of the Leisure Operating Contract (LOC) with Places Leisure, covering

October 2024 to March 2025. It was noted that strong governance and monitoring arrangements had been established, and a positive working relationship had been built with the operator. Early data indicated significant energy savings from Passivhaus measures.

Members raised questions about the Passivhaus accreditation status, expressing concern that it had not yet been achieved. Officers explained that the process sits with the Passivhaus Institute and was outside of council control, but the length of time it was taking was not inconsistent with other Passivhaus accreditations and there was optimism that a decision would be made in the next few months.

Members referenced recent press coverage highlighting operational issues at the new centre. Officers acknowledged these as post-construction challenges that are typical in a large project of this nature, noting that they were being addressed collaboratively by the contractor, operator, and council teams. Some issues had taken longer than anticipated due to complexities, but progress had been made, including completion of remedial works to the learner pool and ongoing resolution of sauna and steam room defects.

Dave Jolliffe, Area Manager at Places Leisure, introduced himself and provided an overview of the Places Leisure management team. He highlighted key developments over the past six months, noting that while there had been some challenges, the transition to the new operator at both Eclipse and Sunbury Leisure Centres had been largely positive.

A majority of staff members and instructors were successfully transferred from the previous operator, with emphasis placed on the employment benefits and development opportunities now available to them. He noted significant capital investment to both leisure centres for continued improvement works, particularly at Sunbury.

Duncan Mackay, Contract Manager at Places Leisure, presented an update on leisure centre performance. He advised that memberships had increased across both Eclipse and Sunbury Leisure centres, as well as swim school occupancy. Attendance figures showed marked growth over the first six months and Places were confident this would continue to grow. .

The Committee were advised of the community engagement Places Leisure were undertaking to allow and encourage young people to access the centre. They also highlighted community events they supported, and summarised future marketing campaigns, plans and events they hoped to launch in the next year for the centres. The Committee noted the positive impact and community reach of the programme, but raised concern about the lower engagement from the Stanwell area which was attributed to transport challenges though solutions were being explored for this.

Positive feedback was reported through member surveys used to calculate Net Promoter Scores, though members noted negative comments regarding Places Leisure on other platforms such as Trustpilot. The Places Leisure

representatives acknowledged these and committed to addressing customer service concerns through ongoing staff training. Members were advised that it was estimated that fewer than ten formal complaints had been received in relation to the new centre in the last six months and these were related to the sauna, steam room, learner pool, and class availability which had all been resolved.

Members also raised concerns around safeguarding and access control, particularly the lack of turnstiles to the dry side facilities and risks around unrestricted access to areas shared by children. It was confirmed that gym and studio access was controlled via gates and QR codes, with recent improvements to rooftop pitch access and consideration being given to additional turnstiles.

Members expressed concern over potential safeguarding risks and stressed the need for robust interim measures, but acknowledged the checks and safeguarding training that centre staff are required to undertake. Officers committed to further review and would explore with Places a range of options including possible access redesigns, acknowledging the cost and complexity involved. In parallel the Council's Strategic Safeguarding Board will give consideration. The Committee requested further information on safeguarding arrangements and provided suggestions on further precautions that could be explored. Members welcomed the performance of Places Leisure and their contributions to date, with particular emphasis placed on prioritising safeguarding.

The Committee **resolved** to:

- 1) Agree to proceed with Option 2 as outlined in the report and requested additional information on safeguarding arrangements at Eclipse Leisure Centre; and
- 2) Acknowledge the performance of the leisure operator for the period October 2024 to March 2025.

Meeting ended at 21:01