

HOLMES PLACE PROGRESS REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to receive the attached progress report from Holmes Place Leisure Management on the progress and development of the Leisure Management Contract (Appendix A). Carl Bentley, Operations Manager for Holmes Place will be present at the meeting to give a further verbal presentation to back up this report.

9 RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) That Members consider the contents of the Holmes Place progress report.

Roger Crofts

Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)

Background Papers:

None.

For further information please contact Jeremy Bourne on:-

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Appendix A.

HOLMES PLACE LEISURE MANAGEMENT

CONTRACT PROGRESS REPORT SEPTEMBER–FEBRUARY 2003

INTRODUCTION

The following report charts the progress and the significant impact that the partnership between Rochford Council and Holmes Place is having in improving the quality of leisure provision in the District.

The contract was implemented by both Holmes Place and the Council very successfully, and now is experiencing levels of use, membership and revenue more than 10% higher than this time last year.

This report focuses on the main achievements that have contributed to this success and addresses some of the key concerns that the Council had during the tender process.

STAFFING

Changes to the staffing structures and levels continue to be implemented inline with our tender proposals. The key changes that have been made include:

- Appointment of Martin Downes as Manager of Freight House Events and Conference Centre.
- Appointment of Keiron McGill as Manager of Great Wakering Sports Centre
- Appointment of an additional Duty Manager and Receptionist at Great Wakering to enable the provision of a better service to our customers
- Appointment of two new Duty Managers at Freight House
- Restructure of roles and responsibilities at Mill Hall, resulting in the redundancy of the Customer Advisor position.
- Currently recruiting for part time receptionists at both Freight House and Mill Hall in order to extend telephone coverage into the evening
- 3% pay increase awarded to all staff from 1st January
- Increase in minimum hourly pay rate from £2.90 to £3.50. Under TUPE Holmes Place inherited a minimum pay rate that it viewed as unacceptable and so increased the rate from 1st January.

CATERING

Catering contractors were appointed and took over the function catering from 1st October 2002.

There were originally separate contractors for Mill Hall and Freight House with each of them being given the opportunity to cater for any functions held at Clements Hall. However following service below our expectations from the contractor at Freight House, the agreement came to an end and now all catering is done by one contractor, Catering by John Waller.

Following this change, the quality and consistency of the catering has greatly improved resulting in far higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Charity groups, small self funded organisations and children's birthday parties can supply their own catering provided it is not cooked on the premises.

MILL HALL DEVELOPMENTS

Work commenced on site on 10th February, and is scheduled to last for 14 weeks. The Terrace Bar, Reception Area and Main Hall will be completed prior to the Civic Dinner.

Unfortunately, due to unforeseen problems during the project tendering process, the commencement of works had to be postponed from the original planned start date in October 2002.

CLEMENTS HALL DEVELOPMENTS

Final details are currently being confirmed with all parties following completion of the appropriate surveys. At present we are on schedule to be able to commence work at the Centre at the beginning of April.

PARK SPORTS CENTRE

Proposals for the development of the Centre were presented to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14th November 2002. Consultation is currently in progress with Council Members and Officers regarding the final facility mix.

MAINTENANCE

A considerable amount of 'backlog' maintenance has continued to be carried out. It has included equipment replacement, new fixtures and fittings and areas of redecoration at all of the Centres.

Examples of the above include:

- Freight House – Replacement of emergency lighting, white lining of car park, redecoration of Pullman Suite and Committee Room, replacement of entrance welcome mats.
- Mill Hall – Replacement of intruder alarm system.
- Great Wakering – Redecoration of circulation corridors and public areas.
- Clements Hall – Replacement of pool dosing equipment, replacement of astro-turf floodlights.

ARTS AND SPORTS DEVELOPMENT

A strong working partnership has developed between Holmes Place managers and the Arts and Sports Development teams.

The Arts Development Officer is actively involved in the new developments at Mill Hall:

- A photography competition is being planned within the local community with competition winners having work displayed in the refurbished Coffee Mill.
- A grant has been awarded by Essex County Council in order to commission a piece of contemporary community art work which will be located within Mill Hall reception.
- The Essex on Tour arts touring scheme has made a number of performances within the facilities managed by Holmes Place.

The Sports Development Officer has assisted in the organisation of a number of events and activities within the facilities. In March Holmes Place are sponsoring and assisting in the organisation of a Community Sports Day at Clements Hall.

LEISURE CARD

The Rochford Leisure Card Scheme will be launched from 1st April in line with our tender proposal. This scheme will replace the existing Centre Membership scheme and include the following benefits for Leisure Card Holders:

- Discounted Pricing at sports facilities
- Discounted Use / Hire of Facilities
- Discounts From Partner Suppliers

The Leisure Card will be available to both residents and non-residents of Rochford, with a 25% discount available to residents at point of purchase.

The scheme will continue to be developed throughout 2003 in conjunction with improved IT management systems being implemented at Clements Hall.

MARKETING ACTIVITY AND SITE PRESENTATION

The following highlights the continued marketing effort and aesthetic improvements that have taken place.

General Communication

There continues to be a concerted effort to communicate with the residents of Rochford District via many different media including:

- Press releases to the key publications in the area
- Production & distribution of Rochford District Matters (32,000)
- Production and Distribution of Focus Newsletters (32,000 x 2)
- Up dating of contract-wide leaflets and presentation materials
- Up dating of website.

Site Presentation

Clements Hall

- Information/notice boards and notice frames are now located at strategic locations throughout the Centre.
- Branded poster shells are used at all times to enhance brands.
- A silk flower display has been located in reception and is changed quarterly.

Freight House

- Improved furniture for sales area
- Replacement of Centre 'Welcome Mats'

Mill Hall

- Information/notice boards and notice frames are now located at strategic locations throughout the Centre.
- Branded poster shells are used at all times to enhance brands.
- A silk flower display has been located in reception and is changed quarterly.

Great Wakering

- Branded poster shells are used at all times to enhance brands.

Clements Hall

ACE (Activity, Care, Education)– Children’s Activities

- Design and production of half term brochure - October
- Design and production of half term brochure - February (Distributed to schools in the district).
- Advertisement – Rochford Sports Council
- Presentation Board updated regularly
- Inclusion in RDM/Focus

O2 Health & Fitness

Internal challenges / promotions have included: -

- Pole to Pole gym challenge

H20 Swim School

New promotional material and activities have been created for the Centres swimming lesson programmes including:

- Class Schedules
- Achievement Certificates
- Newsletters
- Swimming Gala
- Presentation Board updated regularly
- Inclusion in RDM/Focus

Membership Campaigns

- **Campaign - End of Summer Sale**
Open Weekend 21st/22nd - Preview CH plans
Advertised in RDM, Focus and 1/2 page ad in Evening Echo.
- Membership drive through publicity surrounding the CH developments, through RDM, Focus, the Echo plus The Southend & Rayleigh Times.
- **Campaign -Turn Over A New Leaf.**
Referral campaign – members received Holmes Place Fleeces & Robes. Member who referred were also entered into a prize draw to win a pamper day at the Langham Hilton - Health Club & Spa, London.
- New ongoing scheme - All new Centre Members will receive a phone call from Customer Advisors. They will offer 30 days in which they can 'trade in' their Centre Membership and benefit from a discount of 50% on the joining.
- **Tear Drop Campaign - 33,000 mail shot**
Campaign to encourage community to donate Christmas presents for Little Haven Hospice with the incentive of free membership throughout the month of December. All Christmas presents were presented to the Hospice by Councillor Robin Allen, Chairman of RDC, and securing high levels of PR for both parties.
- **Aspire** – Charity challenge & incentive to join as Swim+ Members.
- **New Year New You** offer Special Edition Focus Newsletter – 33,000 mail shot - *New Year New You* offer.
- New Corporate Membership Scheme devised and launched.

Mill Hall

General promotional activity has included:

- Advertisement placed in Limited Edition
- Advertisement in Jewish community news.
- Cinema - Film Bookings
- Leaflets for Children's Activities
- New Presentation Folders designed & produced
- New general information brochure designed & produced
- New entertainments programme to include Comedy Nights, Themed evenings & band nights.
- Display in foyer plus leaflets designed & produced for comedy nights.
- Children's cinema sponsorship from Britvic.
- Inclusion in RDM/Focus - developments

Movies at The Mill

Developed new programme for 2003 April – September
Changed matinee showing's to a Wednesday evening.
Inclusion in RDM/Focus

Freight House

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- Advertisement placed in Limited Edition.
- Advertisement in Jewish community news.
- New Presentation Folders designed & produced
- New general information brochure designed & produced
- New sales brochure currently being developed
- Inclusion in RDM/Focus
- Upgrade of conference materials including pads, pens and complimentary sweet boxes.

Great Wakering Sports Centre

- Presentation is being improved through adherence to brands i.e. Notices/poster shells.
- A new Centre brochure is being published.
- Centre is included in RDM/Focus
- Areas of the Centre being re arranged to promote additional activities targeted at children

General

3 sets A4 advertisements for CH, MH & FH in full colour in all Train Stations, Police Stations & libraries in the Rochford District.

New website undergoing construction.

Developed links with the Press/media liaison/Essex FM