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**HOLMES PLACE PROGRESS REPORT AND LEISURE CARD PROPOSALS**

**1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the Contract Progress Report from Holmes Place – Appendix A.
- 1.2 Proposals are also submitted for the introduction of a district wide leisure card scheme – Appendix B.
- 1.3 Representatives from Holmes Place will be in attendance at the meeting to answer any questions Members may have.

**2 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1 Any resource implication to the Council is dependent on the option chosen for the district wide leisure card scheme and ranges from no addition to the Unitary Charge up to an extra £360,000 and a possible one off cost of £440,000. Members are reminded that any decision involving significant additional resources should be taken as part of the budget cycle where priorities can be examined.

**3 RECOMMENDATION**

That Members note the content of this report and determine their chosen option for a district wide leisure card scheme. (CD(F&ES))

R Crofts

Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)

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**Background Papers:**

None

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**APPENDIX A**

**HOLMES PLACE LEISURE MANAGEMENT – CONTRACT PROGRESS  
REPORT APRIL–AUGUST 2002**

**Introduction**

The following report charts the progress and the impact that the partnership between Rochford Council and Holmes Place has already had in improving the quality of leisure provision in the District.

It focuses on the main achievements and addresses some of the key concerns that the Council had during the tender process.

**Contract Transfer**

There was a very short lead in period for taking over such a major contract and it is to everyone's credit that all aspects of the transfer from the previous contractor to Holmes Place was professionally and smoothly executed.

A key measure of the success of the transfer was that the Council did not receive any customer complaints. The only complaint received by Holmes Place arrived on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April complaining we hadn't done enough since taking over on the Monday!!

**Staffing**

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

- Appointment of Mark Tally as the Rochford Contract Manager
- Appointment of Jenna Starr as contract Sales and Marketing manager
- Appointment of Jennifer Godfrey as Manager of Mill Hall
- Mill Hall reception is now manned during all office hours
- A Fitness Manager and additional Gym Instructors have been appointed at Clements Hall
- A maintenance handyman is now in place for the contract to undertake small repairs at each site
- An evening cleaner at Clements Hall focuses on keeping the changing rooms clean at the peak times
- Subject to finding suitable candidates managers will be appointed at Freight and Great Wakering in the near future

### **Catering**

Catering contractors have now been appointed to take over the function catering from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2002.

There is a separate contractor for Mill Hall and Freight House with each of them being given the opportunity to cater for any functions held at Clements Hall.

It is necessary to give the caterers exclusivity at each site due to operational constraints and health and safety issues. However it has been agreed that, on a limited basis, charity groups, small self funded organisations and children's birthday parties can supply their own catering provided it is plate served and not cooked on the premises.

### **Mill Hall Developments**

An 'Invitation to Tender' document has now been issued to four companies on the Council's select list of builders. These are due to be returned at the end of September with work commencing on site in October. As the selected contractor will have to work around the booked activities and functions it is expected that completion will be in early January 2003.

### **Clements Hall Developments**

Quantity surveyors and mechanical and electrical consultants are currently carrying out detailed surveys of the Centre to prove out the initial designs that we submitted during the tender process. At present we are on schedule to be able to commence work at the Centre during the first quarter of 2003.

### **Park Sports Centre**

It is Holmes Place's intention to bring forward some options for the Park Sports Centre at the November Committee meeting. This will include the provision of a swimming pool at the Centre.

### **Maintenance**

A considerable amount of 'backlog' maintenance has been carried out during the past five months. It has included equipment replacement and new fixtures and fittings and areas of redecoration at all of the Centres.

Examples of the above include a new extract fan for the Clements Hall pool hall, new computers, photocopiers, printers, flip charts, projector screens, videos, televisions, gym/aerobic equipment for the appropriate sites and an upgrade of the emergency lighting at Mill Hall.

### **Arts and Sports Development**

A strong working partnership is being forged between Holmes Place managers and the Arts and Sports Development teams. Activities are already underway in both disciplines supported by the Centres.

### **Marketing Activity and Site Presentation**

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

### **General Communication**

There has been 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 on Leisure Newsletters (32,000 x 2)
- New contract-wide leaflets and presentation materials
- New web site commissioned for the Contract.

### **Contract Signage and Site Presentation**

New signage has been commissioned and placed at Freight House and Clements Hall.

The general appearance of Freight and Clements has been improved by fitting new graphics panels, painting key areas of the buildings and re branding the gym and aerobics programmes.

### **Clements Hall**

An order has been placed for information/notice boards and notice frames to improve communication within the centre.

Branded poster shells have been created for consistency and adhering to brands within the building.

Fresh flowers have been placed in reception and are refreshed weekly.

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

- Half term brochure - June
- Half term brochure - October
- Six-week holiday programme July-Sept (Distributed to schools in the district).
- Advertisement – Rochford Sports Council

**O2 Health & Fitness**

Monthly promotions have included:-

- Have fun, get fit, fly away - targeted mail shot
- Commit To Get Fit – National campaign promoted by the Fitness Industry Association utilising on site databases, centre & casual customers.
- Open Weekend (September) - Inviting public to view plans through media with membership incentive. Providing free ACE activities all weekend to promote brand and activities.
- Tour de France gym challenge
- Aspire Charity Challenge targeted at fitness swimmers

*H2O 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

**Mill Hall**

General promotional activity has included:

- Advertisement placed in The Wedding Guide
- Advertisement placed in Limited Edition
- Cinema - Film Bookings
- Leaflets for Children’s Activities
- New photo-shoot for promotional material

**Movies at The Mill**

- Developed new programme for 2002/2003
- Inclusion in RDM/Focus

**Freight House**

- Advertisement placed in The Wedding Guide
- Advertisement placed in Limited Edition
- Photo-shoot for promotional material, new brochures etc.
- New sales brochure currently being developed
- Inclusion in RDM/Focus
- Upgrade of all conference materials

**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

**All Sites**

- Yellow Pages advertisements in full colour for 2002 - 2003
- Developed links with the Press/media liaison/Essex FM
- Liaison with Sports Development and Arts Development Officers
- New uniforms for all staff

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**APPENDIX B**

**HOLMES PLACE LEISURE MANAGEMENT - DISTRICT WIDE  
LEISURE CARD PROPOSALS**

**1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline various options for the introduction of a Rochford Leisure Card scheme.
- 1.2 Once Members have agreed their favoured option, Holmes Place will implement a scheme in accordance with the timescale detailed in their original tender submission.

**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Holmes Place submitted proposals for a District wide Leisure Card scheme to a previous meeting of the Contracts Panel, providing a number of benefits to those enrolled as 'members'.
- 2.2 The benefits included discount pricing across a range of products and services, telephone booking facility, third party discounts from both local and London partner suppliers, a separate children's scheme, fast track entry to the Centres, special access for those classed as concessionary customers and targeted activities and events.
- 2.3 The current Unitary Charge accounts for the introduction of a scheme based on Holmes Place's tender proposals.
- 2.4 There is no doubt that a Leisure Card scheme provides substantial benefits for the customers but it also enables Holmes Place and the Council to know who the customers are and how best we can serve their needs.
- 2.5 Subsequent discussions with Council Officers have sought to explore the potential of providing greater financial benefits for Rochford residents than current users who live outside the District
- 2.6 Whilst doing this it remains important that entry to a leisure card scheme is not just restricted to residents, as, historically Clements Hall has always attracted a customer base wider than the District boundary. All be it, the maximum benefits would be available to residents of the District. It is also likely that future activities, particularly those

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connected with the Arts programme, will attract an audience from outside of the District.

- 2.7 Once established, consideration could be given to extending the scheme to include the Council's own leisure activities and possibly other Council services, if appropriate, and any other private business offers that provide added value to the scheme.

### **3 PRICE STRUCTURE**

- 3.1 The current pricing structure at Clements Hall comprises Member, Non Member and concessionary charges. To benefit from the member rates customers, resident and non-resident, purchase a membership on an annual basis.
- 3.2 Analysis of the current data base shows that approximately 70% of the members at Clements Hall are residents of the Rochford District. This figure has been used in calculating changes to the Unitary Charge noted in this report.
- 3.3 To gain the maximum financial benefits that a Rochford resident can obtain, proof of residency in the District will need to be produced when joining.
- 3.4 An additional price band would then be created for residents. There are two possible methods of creating this price band, by either increasing the charges within the current price bands thus making the current members price the residents price or introducing a new price below the existing members price.
- 3.5 Holmes Place would resist the former option. Whilst this option could be at no increase to the Unitary Charge they do not believe that it is commercially acceptable to potentially upset 30% of their customers by arbitrarily increasing prices.
- 3.6 This would leave the option of a residents discounted price band. This would be an extra cost to the Council as the current Unitary Charge, detailed in our is accepted tender proposal is based upon the current membership and price levels.

### **4 OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Holmes Place have calculated that reducing the prices for residents at Clements Hall would increase the Council's Unitary Charge by a minimum of £360,000 per annum.



- 4.2 Holmes Place have calculated that it would be possible to provide a financial benefit to residents at the point of entry to the scheme. Residents would pay a lower initial joining fee than non residents based on a 25% reduction. They would then pay on each visit the current members' rates which would be available to both resident and non-resident members. For this option there would be no addition to the Unitary Charge.
- 4.3 Holmes Place have also calculated that the scheme could be operated as detailed above in 4.2 but with the additional benefit to residents that they would also pay a lower fee on each visit. Based on these conditions this would add approximately £360,000 to the Unitary Charge, as detailed in 4.1.
- 4.4 Holmes Place have also calculated the cost of sending all Rochford residents a Leisure Card giving automatic free entry to the leisure card scheme at whatever stage they decide to first visit the Centre. The initial cost of providing each resident with a 'SMART' card would be approximately £440,000 and a further £360,000 per annum if a lower rate was paid on each visit as detailed in 4.1. Additional cards would be charged at £5.00 per card.
- 4.5 Alternatively residents could be given free access to the scheme but rather than the card being posted to every resident in the District as in 4.4, only those wishing to join the leisure card scheme will be issued with a card. This free card upon application would add approximately £89,500 per annum to the Unitary Charge. Residents would then pay current members' rates on each visit as detailed in 4.2. If they were to pay the lower rate on each visit as detailed in 4.1. then this would again add a further £360,000 to the Unitary Charge.