



Report of the Chief Recreation Officer

Scrutiny Board: City Development

Date: 7th December 2010

Subject: Leisure Centre Crèches

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Ward Members consulted
(Referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update scrutiny board on progress made to explore alternative delivery options for leisure centre crèches.

2.0 Background

Following the Scrutiny Board meeting held on 2nd November 2010 officers were asked to; Undertake a review of this issue to identify ways that would offer alternative models for providing crèche facilities at the Council's leisure centers and submit a further report to this Board at its meeting on 7th December 2010.

During that time Scrutiny Board requested that officers maintain crèche provision at the 6 leisure centres identified for closure whilst alternative options were explored. The Acting Director of City Development has agreed to this approach and consequently the service has been instructed to suspend the closure programme and keep the remaining crèches open.

3.0 Information

Further meetings have been held with Early Year's Service and a business manager has been deployed to model potential business options and to seek expressions of interest from external crèche providers and existing users. This process will include consultation with service users and the development of a service specification for use by potential operators. The provisional deadline for concluding this work is week commencing 7th February 2011.

Scrutiny board originally requested that the crèche closures be deferred until the next meeting. Given the timescales required to complete the business modeling and procurement process the closures have been deferred until February 2011 pending the outcome of the review. This will also allow time for a further report to be prepared outlining the results of the review process and the consequent impact on the original decision to close 6 Leisure centre Crèches.

The service is working with the staff who are directly affected to help minimize the uncertainty surrounding their positions and will respond to their individual needs accordingly.

Given the uncertainty surrounding the future of the crèches, some staff have and are actively seeking alternative employment, it should be noted that in the event of staff leaving the service will seek to maintain the provision on a like for like basis.

4.0 Recommendations

That officers continue work to identify alternative models for providing crèche facilities and report back on the findings to Scrutiny Board before the implementation of any final decision.

5.0 Background reports

Scrutiny Minutes from the 2nd November 2010
Delegated decision D37367