

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 8

meeting date: 1 SEPTEMBER 2020
title: UPDATE ON SERVICES AS A RESULT OF COVID19
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: MARK BEVERIDGE

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform Committee how services have responded and adapted during the coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities
 - Community Objectives - To protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of our area
 - Corporate Priorities - To help make people's lives safer and healthier

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that when on March 23, the government placed the UK into lockdown, as a result many of the services the Council delivers were affected. All the leisure services were closed (pool, football pitches, play areas) together with cultural activities (museum, Platform Gallery).
- 2.2 The Council's amenity cleansing staff together with the ground's maintenance staff continued with their activities.
- 2.3 Staff from the closed activities unless shielding were redeployed where possible, especially to the Community Hub which the Council established to help our residents.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 Although the amenity cleansing and ground's maintenance staff continued with their work, it was not without incident. Unfortunately, a small minority of the public verbally abused some of the workers as they carried out their work. Work which was essential to ensure that people could enjoy the limited time the Government had specified was allowed for exercise outside, by ensuring litter was collected and grass was cut, as well as dealing with burials.
- 3.2 The waste bins were used more frequently than was normally the case and as lockdown restrictions eased, over 300 bags, (equating to 8 full transit vans) of waste were removed over one weekend at Edisford River Bank alone.
- 3.3 Although the play areas were closed staff continued to cut the grass to ensure they remained ready for when they were able to be used again.
- 3.4 Regular checks on the Pool were carried out to ensure the site was secure and the plant was working properly. Some maintenance work was also carried out.

3.5 The Platform Gallery was fully redecorated, which was the first time in over a decade the opportunity was available to carry out the work.

3.6 As services were given approval to open, work was undertaken to ensure the facilities were covid safe for both staff and customers. The artificial tennis courts were first used by coaches on a 1-1 basis. The gallery has implemented a one-way system for customers, plus screens for staff to work behind. Play areas have some of the equipment out of use to implement social distancing. At the pool a limited timetable has been introduced together with lane swimming. Leading to a reduced number of swimmers in line with guidance currently in force. The timetable will be slowly expanded to allow family groups to swim for example, but there is no prospect currently of the return of fun sessions or general swimming. The artificial and grass playing pitches are available with restrictions in place.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

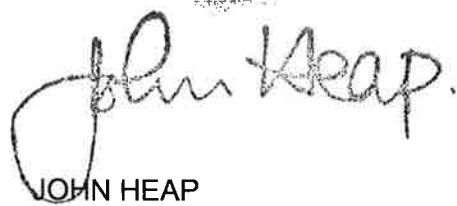
- Resources - there have been additional costs incurred related to the work necessary to get the services opened, for screens and signage for example. As well as a significant reduction in the income received both during lockdown and since with a limited service offer due to the current guidelines placing a limit of number and activities that can be provided. There is currently no indication of change to these restrictions in the foreseeable future, so the fall in income will be reflected in the revenue budget.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – As the guidance issued by Government is amended, the services provided will have to adapt their delivery as necessary.
- Political - None
- Reputation – Overall the Council's delivery of services during the lockdown period and since has been generally welcomed by residents. The Council has sought to open facilities as soon as possible after Government approval has been granted for them to open, thereby ensuring residents have had access to the Council's facilities quickly and safely once they are able to do so.
- Equality & Diversity – All services are available to our residents.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE / CONCLUSION

5.1 Note the Report



MARK BEVERIDGE
HEAD OF CULTURAL AND LEISURE SERVICES



JOHN HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS
(If any)

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