

## **Executive – 24 July 2008**

**Present:** Councillor Henley (Chairman)  
Councillors Brooks, Coles, Horsley, R Lees, Mullins, Prior-Sankey,  
Mrs Smith and A Wedderkopp.

**Officers:** Penny James (Chief Executive), Shirlene Adam (Strategic Director),  
Brendan Cleere (Strategic Director), Tonya Meers (Legal and  
Democratic Services Manager), Steve Hughes (Sports Services  
Manager) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager)

**Also present:** Councillors Bishop, Bowrah, Cavill, Mrs Court-Stenning, Farbahi,  
Ms Herbert, House, Mrs Lees, McMahon, Meikle, Morrell, Murphy,  
Slattery, Mrs Stock-Williams, P Smith, Thorne, Watson,  
Mrs Waymouth, D Wedderkopp, Mrs Whitmarsh, Williams and  
Mrs Wilson

(The meeting commenced at 8.10 pm.)

### **187. Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman (Councillor Henley) and Prior-Sankey and Mrs Smith declared personal interests as de facto Members of the Wyvern Club. Councillor Coles declared a personal interest a Director of Southwest One.

### **188. Tone Leisure Limited's Proposed Savings Plan**

Reference Minute No. 175/2008, reported that decisions made by the Executive at its last meeting had been called in by Councillors Ms Herbert and Thorne.

The call in, which had been made for the following reasons, had been considered at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board which had immediately preceded this meeting of the Executive:-

- (1) The Executive had failed to take note of the will of Full Council;
- (2) The Executive referred to "frustrating the contract between Tone Leisure and Alliance Leisure – no such frustration was intended or implied; and
- (3) There was still a lack of clarity concerning the continuing provision of crèche facilities.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board had decided to refer back the decisions taken by the Executive on 16 July 2008 for further consideration.

During the discussion of this item Councillor Horsley stated that although the decisions of the Executive should stand, efforts would have to be made to

somehow restore relationships between the politicians and the public.

He felt that a full inquiry would be needed to cover:-

- Members' involvement in this matter;
- The processes involved;
- Tone Leisure's involvement, especially future consultation methods; and
- How, following the original meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Executive in June 2008, there had been no indication of the difficulty faced over the past couple of weeks.

Councillor Horsley added that it was clear at the Full Council meeting that the decisions relating to the crèche facilities and the Old Age Pensioner (OAP) subsidy were going to be reversed. However, to try and delay the closure of the squash courts at Blackbrook for consultation with users was, in his view, a "smokescreen". It was clear that people would want the courts retained.

If the call in was accepted, Councillor Horsley felt that this could undermine the future provision of leisure facilities in Taunton Deane.

The Chairman fully understood the frustrations of the public. However, the strong advice from the Statutory Officers about the costs that could arise from delaying the Blackbrook Contract had to be heeded.

In his view, the motion approved at Council did serve a purpose as far as the crèche provision and OAP subsidy was concerned. Although it would be for Tone Leisure to discuss future prices for the crèche with its customers, the views he had received in connection with the OAP subsidy would be taken back to Tone Leisure for consideration.

**Resolved** that:-

- (1) the agreed arrangements with Tone Leisure for the commencement of its contract with Alliance Leisure be confirmed, to ensure that the contract to improve the gym facilities at Blackbrook was upheld;
- (2) the commitment to support Tone Leisure's proposal to retain crèche facilities at both Blackbrook and Wellington Leisure Centres be confirmed, and that Tone Leisure be called upon to discuss its proposed structures with all users of the crèches; and
- (3) Taunton Deane Borough Council and its partners urgently formalise the agreement with the Wyvern Club to provide additional squash facilities at the earliest opportunity for Tone Leisure's Members.

(The meeting ended at 8.38 p.m.)