

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

### **(Abbeycroft Leisure: Strategic Partnership Review – SCOPE)**

**1. Topic:** Abbeycroft Leisure

**2. Purpose of the scrutiny review**

To review the Council's partnership with Abbeycroft Leisure between 2019 to 2023 against the current Collaboration Agreement between the two organisations.

To review the current Collaboration Agreement outcomes and provide a report and recommendations for Overview and Scrutiny to consider before referring to Cabinet.

#### **Key lines of enquiry**

##### Context and Evidence Based Decision Making

- To review the current Collaboration Agreement between Abbeycroft Leisure and West Suffolk Council and its shared objectives to ensure it optimises delivery, outcomes, efficiency and financial performance.
- To review the performance of Abbeycroft against the envisaged outcomes in the Agreement for the period 2019 to 2023.
- To review the financial performance of Abbeycroft against the agreed management fee reduction plan and examine the impact of the support West Suffolk Council (the Council) provided to Abbeycroft during and post-Covid.
- To review the health and community outcomes of Abbeycroft's work, and alignment to the Council's objectives and opportunities to develop this further.
- To consider the impact of the Council's Leisure Investment Fund against the approved business cases including its impact on the management fee which the Council paid to Abbeycroft (which has now reached zero).
- To consider a number of extraordinary factors which have impacted the leisure industry from closures due to Covid, its role in recovery and the energy crisis and inflation and the wider performance of public sector leisure in this time.

##### Development of Options

- To make recommendations to feed into the planned review of the current Collaboration and Funding Agreement between West Suffolk Council (WSC) and Abbeycroft Leisure (ACL) which was finalised in 2019 (and covers the period 2017 to 2032 with scope to extend for two further five-year periods). The agreement provides for the delivery of common objectives by reference to service outcomes and operates on an open book basis with quarterly reviews overseen by the Portfolio Holder for Leisure.

- The review to provide stakeholder feedback to Abbeycroft Leisure and the Council.

### **3. Outcomes**

For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to make evidenced based recommendations to the Cabinet on the Council's future strategic partnership with Abbeycroft Leisure through proposed revisions to the current Collaboration Agreement and its outcomes.

**Note:** This is a piece of work which Cabinet and the Portfolio Holder are supportive for the Committee to carry out.

### **4. Approach**

Site visits/evidence gathering from partners etc. to be carried out by the Task and Finish Group outside of the formal meetings.

The scrutiny review will be carried out by a report prepared by a small Task and Finish Group along with the Strategic Director or Director of Operations and appropriate officers.

The above key lines of enquiry will be investigated by officers and members of the committee and a report presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration and referral to Cabinet.

### **5. Information required**

#### **Background data**

- Scene-setting presentation (To identify any issues and celebrate successes with leisure facilities, and share content of current Collaboration Agreement)
- Examples of good practice from other comparable areas.
- Various site visits to Abbeycroft Leisure facilities as determined by the Task and Finish Group
- Visits to any other local authorities identified by the aforementioned research into good practice for leisure facilities (to be advised).

#### **Views from internal expert advisors**

- Strategic Director
- Director of Operations
- Director of Resources and Property
- Cabinet Member for Leisure
- Service Manager for Facilities and Leisure
- Service Manager for Families and Communities
- Service Manager for Green Space and Heritage
- West Suffolk Councillors

## Views from external expert advisors

- Chief Executive, Abbeycroft Leisure
- Finance Director, Abbeycroft Leisure
- Chair of Trustees, Abbeycroft Leisure
- Partners and users.
- Other local authorities (if applicable in relation to best practice review)

## 6. Internal resources and support

- Establish a small Task and Finish Group
- Strategic Director
- Director of Operations
- Service Manager for Facilities and Leisure
- Christine Brain, Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)

## 7. Timetable and key dates

**Note:** Need to ensure that the strategic objectives of the new administration are confirmed prior to the commencement of this piece of work.

	<b>Date</b>
Work Programme Suggestion Form and Scoping Document considered by OAS Committee.	20 July 2023
Establishment of a small Task and Finish Group (5 to 7 members)	20 July 2023
First Meeting of Task and Finish Group	September 2023
Inquiry and research by the Task and Finish Group	September / October 2023
Final meeting of Task and Finish Group to meet to review and agree key recommendations to be included in report.	October / November 2023
Agreement of draft report and recommendations by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	November 2023
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present the final report and recommendations to Cabinet.	December 2023

## 8. Follow-up/Monitoring

N/A