


**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL  
OFFICER DECISION NOTICE AND RECORD  
(PUBLISHED)**

**1. DECISION TAKEN**

To cease crèche provision at The Pods leisure facility in Scunthorpe and re-provide an offer for customers through a targeted group exercise programme where parents can workout alongside their children.

<b>EXECUTIVE</b>		<b>NON-EXECUTIVE</b>		<b>(Please tick either)</b>
<b>IS THIS A 'KEY DECISION' ? (see definition overleaf)</b>				<b>No</b>
<b>DOES THIS DECISION RELATE TO EXEMPT INFORMATION?</b>				<b>No</b>
<b>EXEMPT PARAGRAPH REFERENCE (NOT TO BE PUBLISHED)</b>				

**2. OFFICER DECISION  
TAKER**

**NAME** Peter Thorpe  
**POSITION/POST** Director Learning, Skills & Culture  
**SIGNATURE**   
**DATE** 31 July 2019

**3. REASONS FOR  
THE DECISION  
(Please ref to any  
report/minute/background  
documents attached)**

The crèche opens daily Monday to Friday between 9am and 1pm and provides childcare for parents and guardians taking part in activities at The Pods. The service is predominately used for pre-school children and some of lower school age during school holidays. On average, just under seven children use the crèche each day and, overall, usage has declined year-on-year. The average subsidy per child per hour visit for the last three financial years was £14.78.

A private provider, located opposite The Pods on Centenary Way, provides childcare facilities.

Due to the financial implications of operating the crèche provision to meet stringent national childcare regulations, along with declining numbers, the crèche service at The Pods is unsustainable.

Consultation at the Pods and by telephone of existing crèche users indicated broad understanding of the unviability of the crèche and the proposal to make a new offer. A minority of those surveyed indicated that they viewed the provision not good value for money; a small minority wanted the provision to be available afternoons and weekends.

The telephone exercise to consult with users accessing the current crèche provision to explore options for provision has been largely positive with members feeding back on activities and classes they would be interested in participating in. Only one member of those telephoned as part of the consultation indicated that they may consider cancelling their Active Lifestyles Leisure membership should the crèche provision in its current format be no longer available.

To support members with childcare needs to access exercise opportunities the service will introduce exercise classes for parents and young children to exercise together.

<p><b>4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED (BY DECISION TAKER(S))</b></p>	<p>To sustain crèche in its current format or to modify hours. The issues of regulatory compliance, financial subsidy and usage rates would not be sufficiently mitigated to make the provision sustainable.</p>
<p><i>TO BE COMPLETED BELOW - <b>ONLY</b> WHEN A DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION REQUIRES PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH A MEMBER (LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, CABINET MEMBER/CHAIRMAN OF A COMMITTEE) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE 'SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS' OR DECISION/MINUTE OF COUNCIL/COMMITTEE OR DECISION/MINUTE OF CABINET/CABINET MEMBER.</i></p>	
<p><b>5. DECISION REQUIRED TO BE TAKEN IN CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBER</b></p>	<p>COUNCILLOR .....</p> <p>POSITION .....</p> <p>SIGNATURE .....</p> <p>DATE .....</p>
<p><b>6. ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY ANY EXECUTIVE (CABINET) MEMBER (S) CONSULTED, WHICH RELATES TO THE DECISION, OR (NON-EXECUTIVE) – ANY MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE THAT DELEGATED THE DECISION TAKEN</b></p>	
<p><b>7. WITH REFERENCE TO 6. ABOVE - HAS ANY DISPENSATION BEEN GRANTED TO THE EXECUTIVE (CABINET) MEMBER? (ONLY APPLIES TO EXECUTIVE)</b></p>	

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO ATTACH ANY ACCOMPANYING REPORT.**

**WHEN COMPLETE, PLEASE SEND TO HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES, CIVIC CENTRE, SCUNTHORPE FOR PUBLISHING.**

## **Participation and Achievement – Active Lifestyles Little Pea Pods Crèche**

### **1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

This report seeks a decision regarding the future of the Active Lifestyles crèche provision at The Pods leisure facility in Scunthorpe.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The crèche opens daily Monday to Friday between 9am and 1pm and provides childcare for parents and guardians taking part in activities at The Pods. The service is predominately used for pre-school children and some of lower school age during school holidays.
- 2.2 There are 36 to 48 bookable spaces per day depending on the age of the children using the crèche. On average, just under seven children use the crèche each day. Overall, usage has declined year-on-year.
- 2.4 The current charge for using the crèche is £1.75 per hour. The crèche service at The Pods is heavily subsidised. The average subsidy per child per hour visit for the last three financial year was £14.78.
- 2.6 The Toy Box Children's Nursery, located opposite The Pods on Centenary Way, provides childcare facilities.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 To reprovide an offer for customers through the withdrawal of a traditional crèche provision and development of a targeted group exercise programme where parents can workout alongside their children.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Due to the financial implications of operating the crèche provision to meet stringent national childcare regulations, along with declining numbers, the crèche service at The Pods is unsustainable. Raising the fees to a figure more in line with the current childcare market would not wipe out the current operating deficit.

- 4.2 To support members with childcare needs to access exercise opportunities the service will introduce a new range of exercise classes for parents and young children to exercise together.
- 4.4 Consultation indicates broad understanding of the unviability of the crèche and the proposal to make a new offer. The adverse impact on membership is anticipated to be minimal.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

- 5.1 Finance - The 2018/19 net cost of operating the crèche was £38k. Staffing costs equalled £36K. The average income for the last three financial years is £5,133 per year. Savings will be reinvested in the wider offer and contribute towards efficiencies already identified in the approved medium term financial plan.
- 5.3 Staffing – There are four Crèche Assistants (2.08fte) employed to operate the crèche provision. These posts will be included in a wide staffing review.
- 5.4 Property - The crèche occupies a prime site in The Pods. The space could be utilised for commercial use or redeveloped to support the community offer.

## **6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

- 6.1 An impact assessment has been undertaken and has identified that the implications of reproviding service will not significantly impact adversely. There are potential positive impacts such as increasing participating and supporting parents across a fuller range of hours. A full impact assessment has been undertaken summarising these impacts and we are committed to continually engaging with service users in order to ensure our services remain inclusive and that any potential barriers to access are minimised.

## **7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED**

- 7.1 A survey of current crèche users provided insight into behaviour patterns, usage and customer view in relation to value for money. Feedback included: a minority of those surveyed indicated that they viewed the provision not good value for money; a small minority wanted the provision to be available afternoons and weekends.
- 7.2 A telephone exercise to consult with users accessing the current crèche provision to explore options for provision has, on the whole, been positive with members feeding back on activities and classes they would be interested in participation in. Only one member of those telephoned as

part of the consultation indicated that they may consider cancelling their Active Lifestyles Leisure membership should the crèche provision in its current format be no longer available.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 That the re-provision of the service offer from crèche to targeted group fitness opportunities for parent and child is approved.

### **DIRECTOR OF Learning Skills and Culture**

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Date: 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019