

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Wednesday 8th April 2009

at 3.30 pm

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:
Councillors Atkinson, Brash, Fleet, A Marshall, McKenna, Plant, Preece, Simmons
and Worthy

Resident Representatives: Mary Green, Evelyn Leck and Mary Power

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**
- 3. MINUTES**
 - 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2009 (*to follow*)
- 4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items.
- 5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items.

6. **CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY
FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No items.

7. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

7.1 Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Draft Final
Report – *Chair of Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum*

8. **ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

9. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – to be confirmed

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

08 April 2009



Report of: Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: ACCESS TO RECREATION FACILITIES FOR
VULNERABLE / OLDER PEOPLE – DRAFT FINAL
REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the draft findings of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum following its investigation into 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People'.

2. SETTING THE SCENE

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 20 June 2008, Members determined their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year. The topic of 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People' was agreed as the second topic for investigation for the Forum's 2008/09 work programme.
- 2.2 Activity is an essential part of life for all individuals and has a significant positive effect on an individual's well-being, improving health, social skills, interaction and community integration. To be active is to be involved in life and to have people to see, places to go and things to do. The National Association for Providers of Activities (NAPA) for Older People is a voluntary organisation dedicated to increasing the profile and understanding of the activity needs for older people, and equipping staff with the skills to enable older people to enjoy a range of activity.
- 2.3 Recreational facilities can be divided into several areas including sport, arts and culture and organised activities. Hartlepool Borough Council provides a wide range of activities. Apart from the numerous parks, open spaces and access to leisure centres, specific areas of activities on offer include, swimming, bowling, aquafit, tea dances, arts and crafts, adult education, bespoke library services and reminiscence therapy.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 To review the current provision of recreation facilities / activities available for vulnerable / older people in Hartlepool exploring the factors which might prevent access to these facilities / activities.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation were agreed by the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum on 21 January 2009:-

- 4.2 The following Terms of Reference for the review are proposed:-

- (a) To consider, and agree, a definition of 'recreation facilities / activities', 'vulnerable people' and 'older people' for the purpose of this investigation;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the Council's current recreation facilities / activities available for vulnerable / older people in Hartlepool;
- (c) To explore the recreation facilities / activities which vulnerable / older people in Hartlepool enjoy and use;
- (d) To compare examples of good practice in other Local Authorities to improve access to recreation facilities for vulnerable / older people; and
- (e) To seek a range of views from vulnerable / older people in relation to access to the Council's recreation facilities / activities.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

- 5.1 Membership of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2008/9 Municipal Year was as outlined below:-

Councillors Atkinson (Vice – Chair), Brash, Fleet, A Marshall, McKenna, Plant, Preece, Simmons (Chair), and Worthy

Resident Representatives:

Mary Green, Evelyn Leck and Mary Power

6. METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

- 6.1 The Members of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum met formally from the 21 January 2009 to 08 April 2009 to discuss and receive

evidence directly relating to their investigation into 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People'. A detailed record of these meetings is available from the Council's Democratic Services or via the Hartlepool Borough Council website.

6.2 A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:-

- (a) A Presentation from Hartlepool Borough Council Officers which was enhanced with verbal evidence;
- (b) Verbal evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health and the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism;
- (c) Verbal and written evidence from service users;
- (d) Verbal evidence from a variety of key stakeholders;
- (e) Site visit by Members to Mill House Leisure Centre in Hartlepool and Freemans Quay Leisure Centre in Durham;
- (f) Site visit by Members to Hartlepool Sportability Club at the Headland Sports Hall; and
- (g) Verbal evidence from Care Home Managers.

FINDINGS

7. DEFINITION OF RECREATION FACILITIES, VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND OLDER PEOPLE

7.1 The Forum decided that it would be beneficial at the start of their investigation to agree key definitions in relation to 'recreation facilities', 'vulnerable people' and 'older people'. Members agreed on the following definitions:

- (i) Recreation facilities: Activities which people take part in within their community, examples include bowling, dancing, swimming. The focus will primarily be on recreational facilities specifically offered by the Council.
- (ii) Vulnerable people: Those adults (aged 18+) who depend upon the support of others, including, for example, people with learning disabilities, sensory impairment, physical disabilities, people who feel isolated.
- (iii) Older people: people aged 50+.

8. VIEWS FROM THE COUNCIL'S PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S FOR ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND CULTURE, LEISURE AND TOURISM

8.1 Members of the Forum agreed that it would be beneficial to their investigation if both the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health and the Portfolio Holder

for Culture, Leisure and Tourism outlined their views in relation to recreation facilities in Hartlepool. The evidence of the Portfolio Holders is outlined below:

Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health

- 8.2 The Council's Adult and Community Services Department provides a significant range of services over and above those that are statutory. Members were informed that the link between many of the leisure services and the public health agenda is very strong and one that should be maintained. Prevention is a key mechanism; keeping people active and involved in recreational activity will keep people healthy.
- 8.3 As Co-Chair of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, the Portfolio Holder is very aware of the excellent work that is being undertaken in this area and emphasised how important it is to get the message across to the public about the range of leisure services available. The Portfolio Holder informed the Forum that the new approach to individual budgets will open up a wider range of leisure services to vulnerable and older people.

Evidence from the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism

- 8.4 Members of the Forum were informed that the take up of certain recreational activities may not be as high as anticipated but this did not mean that these activities should be stopped. The Portfolio Holder was very much in favour of the Council moving away from the concept of single use buildings. For example, using a building as a multi-functioning facility, a police station, a crèche, offices, a facility for sport and leisure activities – in other words a 'community hub' approach.
- 8.5 It was emphasised that despite a lot of promotional work, not all people are aware of the activities / initiatives on offer by the Council. The Forum agreed that the activities / initiatives need to be further publicised on the Council's website, in 'Hartbeat', in the local press and on local radio. The Forum felt that it is important to actively try and engage with vulnerable and older people to encourage their participation.

9. ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY OFFERED BY HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

- 9.1 Members of the Forum were keen to gain an understanding about the recreational facilities and activities currently offered by the Council. The Forum welcomed evidence from the Council's Assistant Director of Community Services.

Evidence from Hartlepool Borough Council

- 9.2 The Forum was very interested to hear about the wide range of recreational facilities offered by the Council including the libraries, museums, allotments, bowling greens and the theatre and arts as well as sport and physical activities and facilities.

- 9.3 The home library service is a mobile library service which is offered by the Council to people who cannot access the library because they are housebound or have mobility difficulties. The service is also offered to nursing and residential homes and sheltered accommodation. Residents are able to choose a variety of books, including large print materials and spoken word materials in the comfort of their own home.
- 9.4 Members were informed that there are approximately 12 reading groups across the town including reading groups for people with visual impairment and mental health needs. Reminiscence sessions and the distribution of reminiscence materials are also available. Members of the Forum questioned the provision of services to the deaf and how people can access these services. It was acknowledged by the Department that translation services are provided but it is an area that required some appropriate information and publicity.
- 9.5 Museums are also a form of recreational activity and within Hartlepool reasonably accessible facilities are offered at Hartlepool Art Gallery, the Museum of Hartlepool and Hartlepool Maritime Experience including the HMS Trincomalee. The Forum was informed that 50% of all the visits to the museums are by older people. The percentage of disabled people who visit the museums is 7.5%, which is low compared to 21.8% of the population reported as disabled but this figure is comparable to similar museums in the North East. The Forum was pleased to hear that the top outreach priority for the next two years is to increase engagement with disabled groups.
- 9.6 Many people own an allotment or enjoy the use of an allotment in Hartlepool as can be seen by the 1100 allotments town wide with a high percentage of older people as tenants. An allotment in Waverley Terrace has been allocated for people with mental health needs and learning disabilities to grow their own vegetables and flowers benefiting all who use it by increasing confidence, self esteem and skills.
- 9.7 Bowling is another very popular activity. Aside from the Indoor Bowls Centre, a management partnership with the Bowls Consortium offers access to several outdoor greens in Hartlepool, all of which now have automatic watering systems.
- 9.8 Members were informed that the Council provides a range of theatre and arts activities including regular tea dances, nostalgia performances with matinees targeted at elderly people in care or living alone. Other community groups include Flex Hartlepool Performances, which is a dance group comprising of people with learning disabilities who have devised and performed new work as part of the Maritime Festival; the Roaring Mouse Group which is a performance group for people with learning disabilities; and an intergenerational physical theatre project is being run within the Burbank Community.
- 9.9 The Forum was informed that in relation to access to recreational activities, older and vulnerable people can access these activities through, for example, the Community Sports Coach Drugs Intervention Programme, the Outdoor Adventurous Activity Programme, the Health Walks Programme, the Special

Olympics Football Tournament at Grayfields or the Warren Road Day Service, which the Council financially supports.

- 9.10 Many activities have been launched by the Council's Sport & Recreation service including 'Boccia', which is a paralympic sport designed for people with cerebral palsy or motor skill disabilities but can be played by anyone. It is similar to bowls in that the aim of the game is to throw the balls, coloured red or blue, as close as possible to a white target ball. A regional event was held recently at the Headland Sports Hall. The Forum was pleased to hear that the Hartlepool Community Activities Network (CAN) has been allocated, by the Primary Care Trust and Communities for Health, £75,000 for physical activity initiatives within Hartlepool. Applications are open to anyone who feels they have a project which will address any gap in existing physical activity provision.
- 9.11 The Forum raised concerns over how groups can access grants available to them from the Council. The Assistant Director of Community Services informed Members that there is a very good network of grant information within Hartlepool and even if groups cannot be supported through the Community Pool, they are advised on how and where to apply for funding. Seaton Carew Sports and Social Club is a good example. The Department has assisted the Club in the development of its bid as a sporting centre while only providing around 5% of the total finance.
- 9.12 As in many areas, football is a key passion for many people. The Football Development Programme is another initiative offered by the Council's Sport & Recreation service which focuses on creating the quantity and quality of opportunities to, play, coach and officiate football through schools, community, and club and league organisations. Many partnerships to other agencies have resulted, for example with Hartlepool MIND and Warren Road Day services. A significant achievement has been the development of disability football in the town.
- 9.13 Hartlepool Sportability Club is a weekly club supported with grant funding by the Council. The Club is based at the Headland Sports Hall whereby vulnerable people can take part in sports activities such as 'Boccia', badminton and trampolining.
- 9.14 Members were also interested to hear of the introduction of concessionary charging to all over 60's from November 2008 and the introduction of free swimming for over 60's and under 16's from April 2009 for two years.
- 9.15 The Forum was very pleased to hear that under National Indicator 8 relating to physical activity participation in 2005 / 06 was 19.1% and by 2007 / 08 participation had increased by 3% to 22.1%, which is the highest increase amongst all other Tees Valley Local Authorities.
- 9.16 It was acknowledged by the Forum that not all of the facilities in Hartlepool are in good physical condition, as seen from the older buildings such as Mill House Leisure Centre. Members were informed of some of the new and future developments for the town including the introduction of the Playbuilder, which is an initiative to enhance play facilities in the town for children and adults and the potential rethinking of the Mill House Centre now that the

development of the H2O Centre on Victoria Harbour is considered to be too far away in the future.

- 9.17 Although new facilities are to be developed, Members of the Forum raised some concerns over the 'centralisation' of leisure services. Many people in the past could walk to their nearest centre, such as the Eldon Grove Leisure Centre, but with provision being centralised, for example at the Mill House Leisure Centre or Headland Leisure Centre, most people are finding themselves having to travel by car or bus. The 'Recreation Strategy' had however concluded that according to facility planning models and taking into account local demographics now and into the future, that there are too many different facilities in the town, many of which not in the right location nor are in good condition. As a result, in order to be able to apply or compete for government finance, the Council have had to take this strategic approach and rationalise accordingly in order to be able to progress with good schemes that are needed in the borough. The leisure provision formerly at Eldon Grove has been moved to other centres within the town and there is now the development of the tennis club on that site which will bring a new and exciting tennis facility that has not previously been provided to this extent in the town.

10. EVIDENCE FROM MEMBERS OF THE SCRUTINY FORUM – SITE VISITS

- 10.1 Members of the Forum thought it would be beneficial to the undertaking of their investigation if they visited a leisure facility in Hartlepool and a leisure facility at another local authority to compare areas of good practice. For the visit in Hartlepool, Members decided that they would visit the Mill House Leisure Centre and the Headland Sports Hall.
- 10.2 Mill House Leisure Centre was originally built in 1972 as a swimming baths but is now a large multi purpose leisure centre. A wide variety of sports activities are available including two swimming pools, one to competition standard with a 57 metre waterslide and diving facilities as well as a teaching pool and sauna and steam facilities. A multi purpose hall is available which is used for a wide range of sporting activities such as badminton, five-a-side football, netball and basketball as well as providing a venue for concerts, theatre productions, trade fairs and conventions. A fitness room is also available equipped with single station resistance equipment and cardio-vascular fitness machines
- 10.3 Classes and courses are also available to all ages and tastes including swimming lessons, football coaching, gymnastics, fitness courses, karate classes and adult swim sessions.
- 10.4 Members of the Forum who visited Mill House Leisure Centre were of the opinion:-
- (a) It is in need of updating, however, Members recognised the difficulties in modernising a 1970's building;
 - (b) The pool is tired and in need of a revamp;

- (c) Lack of disabled parking bays in the main public car park for cars and mini buses;
 - (d) The Forum welcome the idea of a 'changing village' to replace the existing changing rooms; and
 - (e) Signage / leaflets / posters could be improved in the Leisure Centre.
- 10.5 It was apparent by Members who visited Mill House that it is in need of replacement and if funding would allow, Members would like Hartlepool to aspire to a facility similar to Freeman's Quay Leisure Centre in Durham, the newest in the area. It is an ambition of the Council to build a new multi-purpose leisure facility and proposals have been put forward for a new facility, the H2O Centre, but at present these are only proposals and a vision for the future. Members were informed that realistically any kind of replacement of Mill House would be in excess of five years therefore until then the facilities at Mill House would be improved, where possible, and subject to funding availability.
- 10.6 The Council has submitted an application to the Free Swim Capital Modernisation Programme which is a fund provided by the Government as part of the free swimming initiative to help modernise swimming pool provision and support plans for increased physical activity participation as part of the London 2012 Legacy action plan. The Forum was informed that if the Council is successful in their bid then the changing facility within Mill House would be refurbished and redesigned as a 'changing village', hopefully this year.
- 10.7 *Photographs illustrating the Condition of Mill House Leisure Centre*



- 10.8 After the visit to Mill House Leisure Centre, members visited Freeman's Quay Leisure Centre in Durham. This is the newest facility in Durham which has a 25 metre, 8 lane pool and learner pool, 130 work station fitness centre, dance studio, sports hall and internet cafe. The fitness centre offers a stylish surrounding with the best in cardiovascular and resistance equipment. However, the development did come at a cost of £13.5m. Members were impressed to hear that partnership working played a huge role in building the leisure centre and in helping to maintain the sports equipment. The sports

equipment partnership is with a company called Competition Line who supply and maintain the Centre with all its fitness equipment in return for a percentage of the membership fees. With this system in place it ensures that the equipment is always up to date and replaced if necessary.

10.9 Members of the Forum who visited Freeman's Quay Leisure Centre were of the opinion:-

- (a) That it is an outstanding facility with an excellent design;
- (b) That the facility can be easily accessed by people with disabilities; and
- (c) That partnership working in this instance is really beneficial.

10.10 During the site visit Members were also keen to see how older / vulnerable people accessed recreational facilities and therefore thought it would be beneficial to their investigation if they visited Hartlepool Sportability Club. This Club runs every Tuesday night at the Headland Sports Hall offering activities to vulnerable members of the community. Activities on offer are badminton, use of the fitness centre, table tennis and use of the trampoline. Members were very impressed with the Club and the activities on offer and also the facilities at the Headland Sports Hall.

11. RECREATION FACILITIES / ACTIVITIES WHICH VULNERABLE / OLDER PEOPLE IN HARTLEPOOL ENJOY AND USE AND FACTORS PREVENTING ACCESS

11.1 The Forum was very keen to engage with local community groups and clubs and therefore the following groups and clubs were invited to attend the Forum meetings to share their experiences and opinions along with any of their concerns:

- (a) Hartlepool's 50+ Forum;
- (b) Life Chances Partnership Board;
- (c) Learning Disability Partnership Board;
- (d) Hartlepool Mental Health Local Implementation Team;
- (e) Hartlepool Carers;
- (f) Carers' Strategy Group;
- (g) LINKs;
- (h) Hartlepool Sportability Club; and
- (i) Care home managers / residents.

Feedback from the Learning Disability Partnership Board

11.2 The comments from the Learning Disability Partnership Board are summarised below:

(a) In relation to access at Mill House Leisure Centre:

- **Parking:** Disabled parking is available near the building but there are only 3 spaces;
- **Reception:** Automatic doors at the entrance now make it easier to access the leisure centre, however, the big glass screen at reception is not very welcoming, it is not very good for people with poor hearing or people in a wheelchair; there is a lift but it is small;
- **Changing Rooms:** Floor in changing room is slippery and there is nowhere large enough for wheelchair in main changing rooms;
- **Swimming Pool:** There is a hoist but most people do not know this; and
- **Leaflets:** More easy read information about Mill House is needed.

(b) In relation to access at the Headland Sports Hall:

- **Reception / rooms / halls:** nice reception area, wide doors, automatic lighting, access is good but lift is near reception which could be bad if there is a queue. An idea would be to look at moving reception away from lift; and
- In general it is more accessible than the older buildings.

(c) In relation to access at the Bridge:

- Easy to park, easy access, electric door at front, but it sometimes does not work.

(d) In relation to access at Summerhill:

- **Car Park:** speed bumps changed for right of way traffic system; smooth path from disabled parking bays to entrance doors and
- **Reception:** Electric doors on entrance, smooth floors inside main building. Floors look good but not very safe if you are unsteady on your feet and uncomfortable if you are in a wheelchair.

11.3 The Learning Disability Partnership Board highlighted the following as issues that they feel prevent access to recreation facilities:

(a) Not enough disabled car parking spaces;

- (b) Poor access for large vehicles, e.g a mini-bus;
 - (c) Not enough information about what you can do; and
 - (d) Some doors not wide enough for wheelchair users.
- 11.4 The following ideas on how access to leisure services can be improved were suggested:
- (a) More automatic doors on entrance to buildings and inside buildings / widen doorways;
 - (b) More welcoming receptions: not behind glass and low enough for wheelchair users;
 - (c) Facility should be well lit (Mill House needs new carpets, lighting etc throughout); and
 - (d) Need easy to read notices in all buildings with an easy to read information pack about all buildings and what activities are available.

Feedback from the Fens Residents Association

- 11.5 Comments were received from the Fens Residents Association who acknowledged that access, in the form of transport to recreational facilities is a problem for some older people.
- 11.6 One of the difficulties reported to the Association was the lack of activities which people want to attend. For example, vulnerable / older people may not wish to engage in physical activities but instead may wish to participate in mental activities such as educational courses. Unfortunately, residents felt as though the courses which are available are held in venues which are unknown except to those who live in the immediate vicinity or at obscure times.
- 11.7 Suggestions from the Association on activities which are thought to be desirable, which were previously available include:-
- (a) Cookery courses for men;
 - (b) Motorcycle maintenance;
 - (c) Pottery; and
 - (d) The opportunity to study subjects perhaps not studied during school days i.e. GCSE courses.
- 11.8 The Forum agreed with the Association that older people are the fastest growing group in the community and unless they are helped to be more active,

both physically and mentally, there are implications on the amount of money which will need to be spent on care and health in the future.

Feedback from the Heart Health Group

- 11.9 The heart health group is a group for members of the local community with heart conditions along with a multiplicity of other health issues. The group access the Central Library community room on a monthly basis and staff are very helpful, the meeting room is accessible and the facility is centrally located.
- 11.10 The group also access the facility at Summerhill on a fortnightly basis and thinks that it is the 'Jewel in the Crown'. The group is very pleased with the staff who are all extremely welcoming and make every effort to support the members of the group and tailor any pieces of work accordingly. The group uses the motorised wheelchairs, which are very important in terms of inclusion, as it means that all members of the group can be accommodated in all activities and there has been the requisite training and support from staff in order to do this. Activities which the group participate in include team building events, gentle walks, and a variety of speakers.
- 11.11 In terms of support for people with heart conditions, the support from the Sports Development Team is excellent. The staff are well trained, knowledgeable, caring and give great consideration to individual needs. The Forum was extremely pleased to receive these very encouraging comments.
- 11.12 The Forum referred to initiatives which are currently facilitated through the Primary Care Trust, such as an exercise class carried out in the swimming pool for people with heart problems. However, concern was raised over the limited number of places available on such courses and it was suggested that the Council look to work with partner organisations to offer further activities.

Feedback from Hartlepool's 50+ Forum

- 11.13 The Forum was pleased to receive feedback from the 50+ Forum, whose comments are summarised below:
- (a) The changing rooms at Mill House Leisure Centre are uninviting;
 - (b) Lack of knowledge of the activities available prevent people from attending;
 - (c) Cost of hire charges for venues prevent people from using the facilities; and
 - (d) Improved transport links to facilities and / or improved locations of facilities / activities would improve access.

Feedback from Members of the Public

11.14 The main areas of concern which members of the public raised are as follows:

- (a) Travel costs to facilities / activities; and
- (b) Location of facilities / activities, difficult to access because not in the local area.

11.15 Members agreed that travelling costs can escalate if the facility or activity is not offered close by and acknowledged that the centralisation of leisure activities may prevent people from being able to access the activity.

Feedback from Viewpoint

11.16 As Members of the Forum were very keen to engage with the community, one of the ways to do so was by online consultation via the Council's 'Your Town, Your Say' Webpage. An online viewpoint questionnaire was launched at the start of the investigation asking people to give their views on the Council's recreation facilities / activities and the problems encountered when accessing these activities / facilities. However, unfortunately, no responses to the questionnaire were received.

12. CONCLUSIONS

12.1 The Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum concluded:-

- (a) That there are a range of activities offered by the Council which are reasonably accessible by vulnerable / older people;
- (b) That members of the public are unaware of some of the activities / facilities offered by the Council;
- (c) That there is a need for a new leisure facility within Hartlepool but until this is possible, the Forum welcome the updating of the existing facilities;
- (d) That the new leisure facility at Durham is inspirational and is a facility which the Council should strive to aspire to;
- (e) That local community groups play a vital role in providing activities for vulnerable / older people to participate in, as demonstrated by the Hartlepool Sportability Club;
- (f) That due to the centralisation of services, access to facilities / activities for residents may become increasingly difficult due to travelling and transport; and
- (g) That the Free Swim Capital Modernisation funding will be essential to improving Mill House Leisure Centre.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 The Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum has taken evidence from a range of sources to assist in the formulation of a balanced range of recommendations. The Forum's key recommendations to the Cabinet are outlined below:
- (a) That the Council continues to raise public awareness of the available recreational activities through increased promotion of activities on the Council's website, in 'Hartbeat' and in the local press and radio;
 - (b) That the Council develops easy to read notices detailing forthcoming recreational activities to display in all leisure facilities, community and voluntary group buildings, libraries and schools;
 - (c) That the Council produce an easy to read information booklet detailing all the leisure facilities and activities available and it be displayed in all leisure facilities, community and voluntary group buildings, libraries, schools and on the Council's website;
 - (d) That the Council continues to work in partnership with key organisations to develop new recreational activities / initiatives which will improve the health and well being of the people in Hartlepool;
 - (e) That the Council supports the interim improvement measures and future investment in the town's leisure facilities to maintain and improve access, participation and satisfaction levels; and
 - (f) That the Council considers the value of partnership working in any future plans for the building of a new leisure facility within Hartlepool.

14. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 14.1 The Forum is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of the Scrutiny Inquiry. We would like to place on record our appreciation for all those witnesses who attended the Forum. In particular the Forum would like to thank the following for their co-operation during the Scrutiny Investigation:-

Hartlepool Borough Council:

Councillor Ged Hall – Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health.

Councillor Vic Tumilty – Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism

John Mennear – Assistant Director of Community Services

Pat Usher – Sport and Recreation Manager

John Lovatt – Head of Adult Care

Kath Millican – Locality Team Manager

Lyn Duncan – Development Manager

Craig Mitchelson – Duty Manager, Mill House Leisure Centre

External Representatives:

Members of the Public

Glynis Hansen – Hartlepool Sportability Club

Liz Starrs – Hartlepool Sportability Club

Life Chances Partnership Board

Learning Disability Partnership Board

Hartlepool Mental Health Local Implementation Team

Hartlepool Carer's

LINKs

Care Home Managers / residents

Elmtree Community Action Group

Hartlepool's 50+ Forum

**COUNCILLOR CHRIS SIMMONS
CHAIR OF THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

Contact Officer:- Laura Starrs – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 647
Email: laura.starrs@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Draft Scoping Paper' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 January 2009.
- (b) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Setting the Scene and Evidence from the Authority's Portfolio Holder's for Adult and Public Health and Culture, Leisure and Tourism'– Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 February 2009.
- (c) Presentation of the Assistant Director of Community Services entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Setting the Scene delivered to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 February 2009.
- (d) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation facilities for Vulnerable / Older People – Discussion with Key Stakeholders – Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 11 February 2009.
- (e) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Vulnerable / Older People: Discussion with key Stakeholders' - Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 05 March 2009.
- (f) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Access to Recreation facilities for Vulnerable / Older People: Feedback from Site Visit - Covering Report' presented to the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum Services Scrutiny Forum of 05 March 2009.
- (g) Feedback from the Learning Disability Partnership Board;
- (h) Feedback from the Fens Residents Association;
- (i) The National Association for Providers of Activities (NAPA) for Older People, www.napa-activities.co.uk
- (j) Minutes of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum of 21 January 2009, 11 February 2009, 05 March 2009 and 08 April 2009.