



Health and Leisure Review

Dear Manjit

Thank you for forwarding us documents regarding the proposed outsourcing of the council's leisure services.

You should be aware that UNISON is extremely disappointed that the Community and Leisure Scrutiny Panel has decided to recommend to Cabinet the formal tendering of the operation of the District's five leisure centres. At a cost of £100,000 the tender exercise alone constitutes a quarter of the £400,000 reported deficit the council seeks to recover in the running of this service. Such disproportionate expenditure is in our view wholly unjustified.

Furthermore, there is no evidence of the council having undertaken any robust analysis of the adverse impact of this proposal on the hundreds of loyal and hard-working council staff currently delivering the service. Additionally there appears to have been no engagement or consultation with service users and the wider New Forest Community to establish whether there is any support for the privatisation of its valued leisure services.

Our experience from similar exercises in other authorities is that outsourcing such as this is a total false economy which results in little or no financial gain, a lack of investment, a deteriorating and inflexible service restrained by contract and a lack of democratic control and accountability. Any cost savings that are achieved are usually at the expense of staff, their pay, terms and conditions and pensions.

We would therefore strongly urge the Cabinet to reject the panel's recommendations.

Kind Regards

Peter Terry

Regional Organiser

UNISON South East