

WWISE Network presentation to Cabinet Meeting – July 13th 2106

Why is the Council not taking advantage of the opportunity, while the Bath & Keynsham Leisure Centres are being refurbished, to include warm water pools suitable for less-able young people & adults living with long-term conditions?

There has been no such pool since 1996 when the previous warm water pool was filled in in favour of a childrens' activity pool. The main pool was heated to 32°C one day a week until 2004 but then the temperature was capped at 30°C to comply with industry guidelines. Since then these people have not been able to access warm water in order to exercise & go swimming for leisure & recreation as well as to help maintain their health & fitness, & certainly not in their local Leisure Centre like the able-bodied. In 2011 it was agreed by the Council that this should be given serious consideration when the time came to refurbish or rebuild the Leisure Centres and we met with the then Cabinet Members for Neighbourhoods, & also Health & Wellbeing who both agreed this would be a valuable asset to the community because of the many benefits it would provide.

2 years ago we again raised the issue when a new contract for the leisure facilities was being negotiated and there was overwhelming support from Council committees that this should be included as part of the new contract even if the statement from the Council at the time was non-committal.

We have since met then with the consultants & Council officers involved in negotiating the contract, & also GLL once they were awarded the contract, and all were supportive of including such a pool in both Leisure Centres.

It is with dismay therefore that we find it is not in the plans for Bath Leisure Centre nor in the initial proposals for Keynsham. In Bath a second warm water pool has been included but, at 60 – 90cm, it is similar in depth to the Activity pool and so too shallow for young people & adults.

A deep warm water pool would bring a multitude of benefits as well as helping to support the aims of the Council's Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Fit for Life Strategy, Children & Young People's Plan as well as complying with the the Council's Protocol for Decision Making, the Council's Equalities Policy & also its Pledge to Young People.