

**LEISURE (PFI) BOARD held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 15 JANUARY 2003 at 10.00 am**

Present: Councillor A R Row – Chairman.
Councillors R A E Clifford, R J Copping and A J Ketteridge.

Officers in attendance: Mrs E Forbes, Mrs L Bunting, F Chandley,
Ms K Chapman, J B Dickson and Mrs S McLagan.

PFI 210 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Leisure (PFI) Board, held on 14 November 2002, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

PFI 211 **UPDATE ON PROGRESS**

(i) Lord Butler Fitness and Leisure Centre

The Project Manager reported that the handover of the Leisure Centre to Leisure Connection on 1 December 2002 had gone very well. The wet change area had been closed for work to be undertaken on the drainage and tiling and this was due to be completed this week. Work was proceeding well on the Dance Studio and Gym and this should be completed by the March handover date. Pellikaan were then due to start work on the reception area and installing a new lift. Operationally, there had been good co-operation between staff at the Centre and the contractors.

Councillor Ketteridge asked what customer reaction had been to areas of the Centre being moved or closed. The Head of Community and Leisure reported that there had been some intolerance and verbal abuse to staff from some users of the Centre, even though apology notices and copies of the plans had been posted onto notice boards for customer information. It was considered by the Board that, when the work to the Dance Studio and Gym was completed, staff should be sent a letter of thanks for their patience in dealing with the customer difficulties being experienced.

(ii) Helena Romanes School

The Project Manager reported that work at the school was currently one to two weeks ahead of schedule. The new synthetic turfed pitch was complete and the opening was being arranged for Wednesday, 22 January 2003. A tour of the site was also to be arranged for all Members. A great deal of interest had been shown in the pitch from various organisations.

(iii) Stansted Mountfitchet School

Unfortunately work at Stansted was currently four weeks behind schedule as contractors had found a deep pond when digging the foundations for the

frame of the new building. It had therefore been necessary to call on the expertise of structural engineers and to redesign plans. Adverse weather conditions had also caused a delay with the laying of foundations for the frame of the building. However, it was felt that any lost time would be recovered over the period of the contract and that, as soon as the framework was in position, the building would grow quickly. Work had also commenced on the car park.

PFI 212 **NAMING OF THE STANSTED CENTRE**

The Project Manager updated Members on the latest position regarding naming of the Leisure Centre at Stansted and said that a final decision must be made at this meeting. The benefactor had offered to contribute £100,000 towards the project at Stansted on the proviso that the Centre be named as he wished. The Project Manager said that the benefactor had been very patient over the last months and a final answer must be provided.

At the last meeting of the Leisure Board on 14 November 2002, it had been agreed that the option regarding the naming of the Centre be put to Stansted Parish Council and the School for their views. Both the Parish Council and the School had now rejected the name put forward, although Councillor Clifford said the decision by the Parish Council had not been unanimous.

After discussion, Councillor Clifford put forward a proposal that the name of the new Centre, as put to the Parish Council and the School, be accepted. Councillor Ketteridge duly seconded this, saying that the contribution offered by the benefactor had been accounted for in the funding right through the contractual process.

Councillor Row made the suggestion that Members of the Board speak to the Parish Council to further explain the situation, but the Chief Executive reiterated that the results of the consultation with the School and the Parish Council were now known and a final decision on the issue should be made today.

Councillor Copping declared that both the Parish Council and the School had expressed a view, and the Board should accept that view.

Councillor Row then put forward an amendment to the proposal that the decision by the Parish Council and the School be accepted.

On the casting vote of the Chairman the amendment was carried.

RESOLVED that the centre be named the Stansted Mountfitchet Leisure Centre, and that the Resources Committee be asked to consider the possible financial implications of this decision.

PFI 213 MONITORING OF THE PFI CONTRACT

The Head of Community and Leisure presented a report which provided the Board with details of the processes and procedures that officers would implement to monitor the provision of the PFI Leisure Contract. Officers had devised a variety of means by which they would monitor the service and provide the Council with relevant information about the performance of the Leisure Contractor. Six monthly reports would be made to Scrutiny 1 – Community and Housing. Furthermore, if requests were received for fundamental alterations to the Leisure Contract, it would be necessary to report to the Community and Leisure Committee for a decision to be made.

After discussion it was

RESOLVED that the monitoring arrangements for the PFI contract be confirmed.

PFI 214 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**(i) Linteum Leisure**

The Project Manager reported that she was proposing to arrange for members of Linteum Leisure to attend the next PFI Board meeting to be held on 12 March 2003. This would give the opportunity for Members to raise any queries they had regarding the leisure centres.

The meeting ended at 11.05 am.