

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Community Services Committee
DATE	Tuesday 17th JUNE 2014
REPORT TITLE	Leisure Centre Contract Monitoring
Report of	Ross Kennerley – Natural Environment and Recreation Manager Jon Parkinson – Leisure Contracts Officer
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

This report highlights current performance and key issues of the leisure centre management arrangements with Leisure Connection (LC).

Financial implications:

The overall operating costs for 2014/15 are approximately £407k, which includes the key costs of the contract management fee of £336k and £47k for repairs and maintenance. Spend for the year 13/14 has been within budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Committee notes the current contract performance and continued increases in usage figures.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report provides an update on current monitoring issues relating to the performance of the leisure contract with Leisure in The Community/Leisure Connection, for the provision of management services at both Meadowlands (Tavistock) and Parklands (Okehampton) Leisure Centres.
- 1.2 Members will note the Council's approval of the extension of the leisure contract up to a maximum of 2 years to November 2016 back in April. This has also allowed a restructuring of the relationship between the Council, Leisure in The Community and Leisure Connection.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION – CONTRACT PERFORMANCE

Usage & Quality

- 2.1 Current usage figures for both leisure centres are outlined below during October through to April for the 2013/14 year (Oct 2013 – Sept 2014) with a comparison to previous years for the same period;

Site	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12
Meadowlands – Swimming	59,361	52,984	47,214
Parklands – Swimming	37,446	31,749	33,260
Parklands – Fitness	40,849	39,221	31,613

- 2.2 Meadowlands key usage figures;
- Overall usage up by 6,377 visits year to date, with wet and wild and swim school sessions having biggest increases.
 - Swim memberships have increased to 372.
 - Swim school numbers at the highest level recorded with 411 attending weekly.
- 2.3 Parklands key usage figures;
- Overall usage up by 5,544 visits year to date, with swim school and 50+ swimming having biggest increases.
 - Swim school numbers have increased again with 406 attending weekly.
 - Overall centre memberships stand at a record 991 members, helped with the introduction of additional fitness classes, such as 6 spinning classes.

Repairs & Maintenance/Asset Management

- 2.4 Recent key works that have taken place at both sites are as follows with such works being part of Leisure Connection's maintenance costs and the Council's allocated revenue maintenance budget;

Meadowlands;

- Completed works;
LC – All fixed electricals and emergency lighting works. New circulation pump and repairs to outdoor ride pumps. Dry side toilet refurbishment and re-decoration of entrance and reception area.
WDBC – Works now finished on changing room grouting. Roof leaks and patio door leaks. Broken pool side window from vandalism – which has taken longer to replace due to works related to guttering. Car park bollards now in place.
- Proposed Works;
LC; Repairs needed to outdoor slide.

Parklands:

- Completed Works;
LC; Air handling motor unit replaced on pool side with all air handling now controlled centrally, except dance studio. The swimming pool had to close on the 5th – 11th March due to the air handling unit failure and on the 24th March due to a faulty sensor. Gym and studio air conditioning units repaired. All fixed electrical and emergency lighting works. Plant room for pool, key pumps and dosing units replaced. New spinning bikes and gym equipment now installed.
WDBC: Dance studio roof leaks repaired.
- Proposed Works;
LC; New gym carpet and redecoration taking place 2nd-5th June.

Customer Feedback/User Groups

2.5 Customer comments for January - April 2013 for both sites show;

Meadowlands;	51 positive	56 negative
Parklands;	51 positive	28 negative

Meadowlands:

- Positive comments for aqua fit classes, overall pool experience and friendly staff.
- March had a high number of negative comments, 33, with most concerning pool temperatures and cold showers. This is a continuing problem at high demand times as well as being affected by design and service supply. Also at busy times keeping the changing rooms clean is a constant challenge for centre staff. Duty Managers to monitor temperature concerns closely, less complaints were received in April.

Parklands:

- Overall more positive comments have been received this period, with good feedback on overall centre experience, friendly staff, variety of classes and cleaning standards.
- Negative comments were high in March relating to the poor air conditioning and pool air temperature. Repairs and improvements and now been made in these areas, which were reflected in April's positive comments.

2.6 Parklands User Group meetings were held in January and April. The January meet did highlight some specific cleaning concerns around the sports hall, gym and studio areas. These were picked up directly by the Contract Manager and action taken. Also the Manager indicated improvements were being made to the gym with better equipment and new carpet to be installed.

2.7 Meadowlands User Group held in April had a high attendance with swimming club reps and local Members meeting as well due to the recent concerns expressed about the future of the pool. It was a positive meeting with a clearer understanding of the key issues discussed.

Marketing Initiatives

- 2.8 Leisure Connection has completed a major re-branding of its business through its '1 Life Live More Live Well' identity. This includes new promotional materials and signage for both centres and membership/user cards. Also a national '1 Life' Festival will be taking place.
- 2.9 Recent initiatives have included;
- Extension of swim school programme to 50 weeks and provision of an online programme for parents to monitor progress.
 - 50% off member joining fees and vouchers to win.
 - Free 7 day gym/pool passes during March.
 - Various retail promotions – goggles, swim clothing.
- 2.11 Leisure Connection has also developed a strong apprentice programme with the contract now having 6 apprentices with a further 8 on NVQs learning programme.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The provision of leisure services is a discretionary activity. The Council has powers to deal with leisure facilities under the general power of competence provided by Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 and s19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Leisure Contract maintains its regular monthly financial payments to enable Leisure Connection to fulfil its business plans and operational arrangements for the running of both centres.
- 4.2 Ongoing repairs and maintenance obligations on WDBC are met from the allocated maintenance budgets. Anticipated capital works will be reported against the capital programme.
- 4.3 For this financial year and following a positive trading surplus of Leisure in The Community, the West Devon contract received a £10,000 grant to benefit local community programmes. This has been allocated to Okehampton Community Recreation Association and Tavistock Community Sports Centre to provide various new and extended activities.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 As previously reported the relationship and partnership work with Leisure Connection/LiTC has improved and contract performance continues to highlight increases in attendances and customer experiences.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

No	Risk Title	Risk/ Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status			Mitigating & Management actions	Owner- ship	
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Poor Contract Performance	Leisure Connections underperforms with financial and customer implications	5	2	10	↓	Regular contract performance monitoring and review measures implemented as required.	Head of Assets
2	Legislative changes on current financial arrangement	Failure of Council to receive full benefit of savings if finance or tax regime changes	4	2	8	↔	Early warning of legal changes that enable financial risk management	Head of Finance
3	Repairs, maintenance and life cycle costs	Ongoing costs of routine and lifecycle maintenance increase.	5	2	10	↓	Regular monitoring and inspections of centres. Overall asset management of centres, including site condition surveys. Cost benefit assessment of works in light of strategic review.	Head of Assets

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community Life
Statutory powers:	As above
Considerations of equality and human rights:	No issues identified
Biodiversity considerations:	No issues identified
Sustainability considerations:	Leisure Connection energy audit and carbon footprint reduction.
Crime and disorder implications:	Links to reduced crime and anti social behaviour.
Background papers:	Leisure Services Management Contract – Leisure Connection