

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Community Services Committee
DATE	Tuesday 28th October 2014
REPORT TITLE	Leisure Centre Contract Monitoring
Joint Report of	Natural Environment and Recreation Manager and the 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 in The Community (LiTC) and 1Life, formerly Leisure Connection.

Financial implications:

The overall operating costs for 2014/15 are c£407k, which includes the key costs of the contract management fee of £336k and £47k for repairs and maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. 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 LiTC/1Life, for the provision of management services at both Meadowlands (Tavistock) and Parklands (Okehampton) Leisure Centres.
- 1.2 The current contract has now run into the extension period up to November 2016 as approved by Council last April. This allowed a restructuring of the relationship between the Council, LiTC and 1Life.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION – CONTRACT PERFORMANCE

Usage & Quality

- 2.1 Overall usage figures for both leisure centres are outlined below for the last year 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	104,685	98,971	91,050
Parklands – Swimming	62,572	53,447	56,862
Parklands – Fitness	66,849	67,053	53,663

- 2.2 Meadowlands key usage figures;

- Overall usage up by 5,714 visits, with swim school leading the way.
- Swim memberships have increased to 487
- Adult swims have fallen over the past year but space has been taken up by pre-school children and adult swims and more school bookings. Wet and wild sessions were popular again.
- 7 primary schools using the pool; Mount Kelly Prep, Bere Alston, Tavistock Primary, Princetown, Bickleigh Down, Lamerton and St Peters.

- 2.3 Parklands key usage figures;

- Overall usage up by 8,191 visits year to date, although actual gym use slightly decreased due to a week closure for refurbishment and some air handling issues. Fitness classes saw a rise in use due to new classes for Spinning – indoor cycling and Insanity – high intensity fitness.
- Swim school numbers remain high with 379 attending, as well as good growth in junior and adult swims.
- Overall centre memberships stand at a record 1083 members.
- 8 primary schools using the centre; Okehampton, South Tawton, Hatherleigh, Exbourne, Lydford, Winkleigh, Halwill and Northlew.

- 2.4 Community based activity programmes include regular sessions and work with groups such as Tavistock Adult Learning, Helen McFarlane, the Molly Owen Centre and Puzzle Tree. As well Meadowlands held training sessions for the Special Olympics that were hosted in Bath.

- 2.5 The GP Referral Scheme at Parklands, which receives no health funding to operate, attracts 60 clients being treated for heart conditions, hypertension, diabetes and obesity.

Repairs & Maintenance/Asset Management

- 2.6 Recent key works for the last quarter 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 – Minor electrical repairs to hand dryers, lighting and in plant room following leak.
WDBC – Pool side window replaced, roof safety line test.
- Proposed Works;
LC: Repairs to circulation and rain shower pumps.
WDBC: to clean out moat.

Parklands

- Completed Works;
LC; New gym carpet and redecoration, repairs to Lift.
- Proposed Works;
LC: Office air con re-gas, new door access controls.

Customer Feedback/User Groups

2.7 Customer comments for April – September 2014 for both sites are shown below with a comparison to the first 6 months;

	October 2013 – March 2014		April – September 2014	
Meadowlands	77 positive	97 negative	62 positive	47 negative
Parklands	52 positive	45 negative	41 positive	31 negative

Meadowlands:

- Overall positive comments were greater and reflected again on friendliness of staff, swim teachers, good pool temperatures and fun swim experience.
- July had a small number of complaints on cold showers and this was an issue with the boilers which was resolved. Otherwise some comments on poor cleaning at certain times which were acted on and some on pool programming. Also the last week in September the pool temperature was cold which the Centre has now switched pool heating to winter settings.

Parklands:

- Positive feedback on overall quality of centre, great pool and more fitness classes being provided.
- Some negative comments still being made on being too warm in the dance studio, though air con is all working properly. Also a few comments on poor quality around cafe offer and choice. Plus since the College has been using the gym, several users have noted it being too busy and no space.

2.8 Parklands User Group met in May and just recently in September. Initial concern expressed in May at the media coverage around future of the leisure centres. The new door access and use of 1Life membership cards was clarified. Otters Swim Club expressed some concern on new prices, which centre will provide

more background and clarify. Also issue over school locking entrance gate at rear of centre, which is used from car park. Centre to follow this up.

- 2.9 Meadowlands User Group held in July expressed concerns over possible closure and provision at Kelly. Letter from Chair to be sent on to Sport England and Council. 1Life highlighted the positives about the pool, swim school and overall usage going very well and improvements still being made to the facility.

Marketing Initiatives

- 2.10 1Life has successfully completed the introduction of its new brand and membership cards and now has over 1,500 card holders at Okehampton and 1,200 card holders at Meadowlands. The membership cards are free and enable 1Life to directly contact customers via email/text/web with regards to membership promotions, centre activities and any changes to opening times etc.
- 2.11 Community outreach activities included visiting the Okehampton Show and Morrison's at Tavistock which resulted in over 400 1Life cards being captured. West Devon Connect Days are attended and contact made with 14 parish councils.
- 2.12 Recent initiatives have included;
- Summer promotions, 45 days swimming with children for just £30 and half price family swims.
 - 3 month reduced membership offer
- 2.13 On staffing and its apprentices, 1Life have 7 apprentices employed learning various NVQ Level 2 skills across customer service, business administration and leisure and fitness. A further 7 are on other learning programmes.

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 The LiTC community grants for Tavistock Sports Centre and OCRA have seen various initiatives and programmes take place across the borough to the direct benefit of £10,000, plus other partnership funding as well.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The relationship and partnership work with 1Life/LiTC continues to be positive with good contract performance highlighting increases in attendances and customer experiences.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			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