

Report to:	RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
Date of Meeting	7 December 2017

LEISURE SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To review the performance of Leisure Services with an emphasis on service delivery, statistics, performance indicators and customer satisfaction. The report provides a brief outline of the various elements of the services and highlights any current or anticipated issues.

2.0 Recommendation:

- 2.1 To scrutinise the performance of the service and identify any matters for further scrutiny.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation:

- 3.1 To ensure effective scrutiny of Leisure Services.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

- 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

Request Internal Audit to programme in to the annual work plan.
Refer to external audit.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is 'Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience'.

5.0 Report Information

5.1 Scope of the Report

5.1.1 The report provides an overview of the various sections of Leisure Services and highlights any current or anticipated challenges facing the service. Leisure Services provide a broad range of activities and programmes from within the three main leisure facilities and in community settings to help local residents to lead an active and healthy lifestyle.

5.1.2 The scope of this report includes all service areas within Leisure, as set out below:

- Leisure facilities;
 - Palatine Leisure Centre
 - Blackpool Sports Centre
 - Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre
- Outdoor Activities Service
- School Games programme
- Active Blackpool GP Referral programme
- Family Weight Management programme – Making Changes
- Better Start Volunteer Programme
- Outreach and Street Games programmes

5.1.3 In 2016/2017 the leisure services received over one million attendances to activities and facilities provided across Blackpool, with the three main leisure facilities alone seeing in excess of 940,000 attendances. The leisure service provides a range of activities and programmes to meet the growing demand of supporting people to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. The range of services include targeted programmes that are free at the point of delivery along with a broad range of universal activities, which are available at a subsidised rate. The leisure facilities offer a range of concessionary pricing options for targeted groups along with 'pay as you go', direct debit and annual membership options for those accessing the facilities on a regular basis.

5.1.4 The service delivers a number of other concessionary programmes to attract hard to reach groups and individuals from across Blackpool, more detail can be found regarding these programmes in Appendix 7(a).

5.2 **Budget Information**

5.2.1 Leisure Services has an annual expenditure budget of £3,963,000 and an annual income target of £3,264,000, resulting in a net annual cost of £699,000.

5.2.2 Property Services have a maintenance budget for facilities of £1,109,000 of which £478,000 relates to NNDR and £358,000 to energy. These costs have increased significantly over the last few years. In addition, there is a notional capital depreciation charge set against the facilities of £659,000.

5.3 **Service Performance, Highlights and Challenges**

5.3.1 A Performance dashboard can be found in Appendix 7(b) giving a more detailed overview of patronage performance in key areas along with customer feedback statistics this year to date compared to the same period in 2016/2017.

5.4 **Health and Fitness**

5.4.1 Leisure Services operate health and fitness facilities at all three of its leisure centres. The facilities include dedicated fitness studios, spinning studios and exercise class studios at each site. In 2016/2017 the health and fitness facilities had over 265,000 visits across the three sites with Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre seeing the highest number of visits.

5.4.2 The service has recently entered into a partnership with a private marketing and business development company, Big Wave Media, who specialise in supporting local authority leisure providers to continue to grow this area of the business. Whilst this service area has some stretching and challenging income targets to achieve, it has been identified following a recent review that there is an opportunity for growth in this area.

5.4.3 Health and Fitness alone generates in excess of £1,000,000 a year for the service. The management team dedicate a lot of their time and resources focusing on achieving these targets, which at times can result in other areas of the business receiving less attention.

5.4.4 Furthermore, local competition has increased in recent years with the opening of DW Fitness and the first budget gym, the Gym Group opening in the town centre resulting in the need for the service to distinguish themselves from the competition, keep up with industry trends and market themselves effectively to maintain and grow the share of the health and fitness market.

5.4.5 This service area has seen a 9% decline in patronage in 2017 year to date as demonstrated in the performance overview table (Appendix 7(b)), but having recently entered into partnership with Big Wave, clear action plans are in place to improve and exceed previous patronage and income targets in 2018/2019.

5.5 Active Blackpool

- 5.5.1 The Active Blackpool programme is a referral programme aimed at individuals who would benefit from additional support to lead a more active lifestyle. Traditionally, the programme has accepted referrals from health practitioners, with a particular focus on GP surgeries, however over the last two years there has been a focus on increasing the referral partners to other health practitioners and partners which has resulted in a growth in the programme as demonstrated in the table below:

Active Blackpool Facilities Patronage	
2012/13	24,126
2013/14	36,959
2014/15	56,641
2015/16	74,494
2016/17	75,160
2017/18 YTD	52,975

- 5.5.2 Based on the year to date figures, the Active Blackpool programme is expected to grow by a further 15% in 2017/2018 compared to 2016/2017.
- 5.5.3 The programme is open ended, allowing customers to access the service for life. There is an ongoing cost for customers from the start of the programme, giving them the opportunity to 'pay as you go' or pay for a membership via a monthly direct debit (£20/month).
- 5.5.4 The service has a very strong partnership with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Service ran by Blackpool Victoria Teaching Hospital, who work in partnership to deliver a cardiac rehabilitation programme for clients who have a cardiac condition, including heart failure, from the leisure facilities. This programme has seen significant growth in the previous 12 months, with 4245 attendances to cardiac specific classes ran by Active Blackpool, from April – October 2017 compared to 2542 for the same period in 2016 – a 67% increase.
- 5.5.5 The Active Blackpool team is currently working closely with the Stroke Association and Macmillan Cancer Support in partnership with the Cancer service at Blackpool Victoria Teaching Hospital to offer a referral pathway and dedicated sessions for patients engaged with these services.

5.6 Learn to Swim

- 5.6.1 The learn to swim scheme which runs at both Palatine Leisure Centre and Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre provides an opportunity for children to learn to swim, develop their aquatic skills and ultimately progress into the local swimming club, Blackpool Aquatics. Leisure Services work in partnership with Blackpool Aquatics to provide a seamless progression pathway and competitive swimming opportunities for local people.

- 5.6.2 The learn to swim programme has seen significant growth of over 20% in the previous 12 months, following the increase in delivery weeks to 50 weeks/ year, the introduction of a direct debit payment option and the 'parent portal' allowing parents to monitor their child's progress through an online account.
- 5.6.3 The learn to swim programme is projected to continue growing over the next three years, which presents an opportunity for increased income generation and an increase in the number of children learning a vital life skill.
- 5.6.4 However this growth presents a number of challenges in balancing the demand for water space across the two swimming pools, to meet the demands of a wide range of customers from local clubs to families and fitness swimmers. Furthermore, there will need to be consideration given to growing the pool of qualified swimming coaches as demand nationally is not currently being met. Consideration is being given to a development programme through utilisation of the apprenticeship levy and upskilling of existing staff in other roles.

5.7 Feel Good Factory

- 5.7.1 Leisure Services have two Feel Good Factory facilities – one at Palatine Leisure Centre and the other at Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre. The facilities are aimed at the older generation and adults who are inactive. The facilities offer a range of toning equipment that are easy to use and low impact in a friendly and social setting, providing a workout environment that is relaxing and informal.
- 5.7.2 The facilities continue to grow in popularity, providing an exercise opportunity for a previously uncatered for market. In 2016/2017, the facilities attracted over 88,000 visits and in the first six months of this year, usage has grown by 19% compared to the same period the previous year.

5.8 Outdoor Activities

- 5.8.1 The outdoor activity service obtained its AALA license in March 2017, enabling them to provide a range of watersports activities including kayaking, canoeing and raft building on Stanley Park Lake to children and young people across Blackpool. In addition, the service offers a range of outdoor activity packages, including high ropes activities, team building, den building and ecological activities, rock climbing and bouldering.
- 5.8.2 The service is still in its infancy and is continuing to increase the range of groups and organisations it works with including a recent partnership arrangement with the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) who now include 20 hours/ week of outdoor activities as part of their curriculum offering to all of their pupils. Furthermore, a number of primary and secondary schools have purchased education packages to enable local children to develop their skills and experiences through outdoor activities.

5.8.3 A challenge for this service remains the unpredictable nature of Britain's weather, which impacts particularly on 'pay on the day' customers to both the high ropes course and watersports activities. The weather has impacted on the income generated over the Summer of 2017, however the shortfall has been recovered through an increase in groups and educational bookings.

5.9 Customer Engagement

5.9.1 Leisure Services take a proactive approach to engaging with customers and encourage them to provide feedback on their visitor experience to enable the service to make informed decisions on how to improve the service.

5.9.2 Leisure Services uses an internationally recognised system for proactively measuring satisfaction amongst service users.

5.9.3 Net Promoter Score®, or NPS®, measures customer experience across a number of business sectors internationally. Customers are asked 'On a scale of 0 - 10 how likely are you to recommend Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre to friends and family?' A more detailed overview of the system and performance for 2016/2017 can be found in Appendix 7(c)

6.0 Service wide challenges

6.1 The service strives to continually provide opportunities to increase the health and wellbeing of Blackpool residents through a range of free and low cost initiatives, projects and activities. In recent years the amount of external funding opportunities available to local authority leisure providers has reduced significantly making the opportunity to provide targeted projects and activities challenging. Furthermore, the drive to realise savings and reduce the net subsidy of providing leisure has resulted in increased income targets in the more commercial activities provided, such as health and fitness.

6.2 The continual need to balance the drive to increase income with supporting Blackpool residents to lead a healthier lifestyle through subsidised initiatives can be challenging, particularly when communicating our service aims and objectives to partners and third sector organisations.

6.3 Future Priorities

6.4 The Blackpool Sport and Physical Activity Strategy requires a refresh to ensure it continues to reflect the aims and objectives of our local, regional and national partners and adopts the new direction of travel for sport and physical activity set out by Sport England in their latest strategy 'Towards an Active Nation'.

6.5 The service will continue to focus on developing the range of facility based activities, that both reflect a growing a developing market and meet the needs of the local residents. This

will involve continually reviewing the areas that are popular and those that are underutilised as well as continuing to follow trends within the industry.

- 6.6 The aging condition of the buildings present a challenge in retaining customers who expect a higher standard of facilities than is currently on offer, particularly ancillary facilities such as changing rooms and toilets. Property Services hold the budget for building maintenance, which has failed to meet customer expectations in recent years due to budget constraints. Moving forward, consideration will need to be given to how the facilities can be invested in to improve standards and meet customer expectations.
- 6.7 A key focus for the service will be to grow the range of outdoor activities on offer through exploring options to de-silt Stanley Park lake and improve the ancillary facilities, to offer a true Outdoor Activity Centre in Blackpool. This work will enable a greater range of watersports to be offered such as sailing, windsurfing, stand up paddle boarding and potentially open water swimming.
- 6.8 Marketing of the service is key to ensuring its success – raising the brand awareness and reaching new audiences who don't currently or have never accessed our service will be a priority to ensure the service continues to grow and achieve the overall aim of supporting local people to lead a more active and healthy lifestyle.
- 6.9 A clearer understanding of the impact of the GDPR regulations due to come into force in May 2018 is a priority to ensure we are still able to effectively market and promote our services to existing and potential customers without being in breach of the new regulations.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

7.0 List of Appendices:

Appendix 7(a) – List of concessionary programmes

Appendix 7(b) – Performance Dashboard

Appendix 7(c) – Systems and Performances

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 None

9.0 Human Resources considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None

14.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:

14.1 None

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None