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| <b>Report to:</b>        | <b>RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN'S<br/>SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>   |
| <b>Relevant Officer:</b> | John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental<br>Services |
| <b>Date of Meeting</b>   | 7 June 2018  |

## 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 an update on performance following on from the previous report presented on 7 December 2017.

### 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 Leisure Services contributes to all three council priorities:

- Priority One 'The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool';
- Priority Two 'Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience' ;
- Priority Three 'Organisational Resilience'.

## **5.0 Report Information**

### **5.1 Scope of the Report**

5.1.1 The report provides an update on the performance of the service with year-end finance and patronage figures for 2017/2018. Leisure Services' 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 & 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 2017/2018 the leisure service received over one million attendances to activities and facilities provided across Blackpool, with the three main leisure facilities alone seeing 1,032,746 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 includes 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.

### **5.2 Budget Information**

5.2.1 Leisure Services has an annual expenditure budget of £4,075,000 and an annual income target of £3,264,000, resulting in a net annual cost of £811,000.

- 5.2.2. Property Services has a maintenance budget for facilities of £1,775,000 of which £478,000 relates to NNDR and £393,000 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 £552,000.

### **5.3 Service Performance, Highlights and Challenges**

- 5.3.1 A performance dashboard can be found in Appendix 9(a) giving a more detailed overview of patronage performance in key areas along with customer feedback statistics for 2017/2018 compared to 2016/2017.

### **5.4 Health & Fitness**

- 5.4.1 Leisure Services operate health and fitness facilities at all three leisure centres. The facilities include dedicated fitness studios, spinning studios and exercise class studios at each site. In 2017/2018 the health and fitness facilities had over 260,000 visits across the three sites with Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre seeing the highest number of visits. Whilst this figure is less than the previous year, the growth in health and fitness in the last six months of the year was considerable.
- 5.4.2 The growth is thanks to the service entering into a partnership with a private marketing and business development company, Big Wave Media in September 2017, who specialise in supporting local authority leisure providers to continue to grow this area of the business. The graph shown in Appendix 9(a) clearly demonstrates the impact Big Wave has had since September 2017, with the income reaching similar levels to two years prior when the service operated four health and fitness facilities.
- 5.4.3 Whilst the health and fitness income targets for 2018/2019 are stretching, work carried out to analyse the latent demand locally demonstrates that these figures are achievable.

### **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:

| <b>Active Blackpool Facilities Patronage</b> |        |
|--|--------|
| 2012/13                                      | 24,126 |
| 2013/14                                      | 36,959 |
| 2014/15                                      | 56,641 |

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| 2015/16 | 74,494 |
| 2016/17 | 75,160 |
| 2017/18 | 80,306 |

- 5.5.2 The Active Blackpool programme saw a 7% growth in 2017/2018 compared to the previous year.
- 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 4,245 attendances to cardiac specific classes ran by Active Blackpool, from April – October 2017 compared to 2,542 for the same period in 2016 – a 67% increase.
- 5.5.5 The Active Blackpool team will be trialing a self-referral campaign in June 2018 via social media aimed at individuals with diabetes. The campaign will ask if they would like to improve their health and wellbeing and if so, ask them to complete a contact form inviting them in for a health and wellbeing talk to encourage them to enroll on the Active Blackpool programme. If the campaign is successful, the service will look to broaden the campaign to other health conditions to support more local residents with existing health conditions to lead a healthy lifestyle.

## **5.6 Learn to Swim**

- 5.6.1 The learn to swim scheme which runs at both Palatine Leisure Centre and Moor Park Health & 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 30% 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 has 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 is 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 un-catered for market. In 2017/2018, the facilities attracted over 89,000 visits, with Moor Park particularly seeing a significant increase in users.

## **5.8 Outdoor Activities**

- 5.8.1 The outdoor activity service obtained their 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 impacted on the income generated over the summer of 2017, however the shortfall was 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.

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

- 5.9.2 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?’. Appendix 9(a) shows that between 01/05/17 and 01/04/18 over 6,300 feedback questionnaires were sent to customers with over 800 responding. The overall satisfaction scores for Palatine Leisure Centre and Blackpool Sports Centre saw an increase compared to the same period the previous year.

## **5.10 Service wide challenges**

- 5.10.1 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.
- 5.10.2 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.

## **5.11 Future Priorities**

- 5.11.1 A key project due to take place over the Summer of 2018 is the development of a new 3G pitch in Stanley Park to replace one of the two existing sand dressed pitches. The development is part of a town wider approach to developing facilities to meet the growing demands of football with a new pitch also being built on the Unity Academy site. The project is funded by the Football Foundation and supported by Lancashire Football Association.
- 5.11.2 The aging condition of the buildings presents 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.
- 5.11.3 A focus on the Outdoor Activity service on Stanley Park will continue. Leisure and Parks are

currently working in partnership with the Friends of Stanley Park to explore external funding opportunities that would enable the lake to be desilted along with wider park infrastructure improvements. 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.

- 5.11.4 Due to the increase in direct debit collections in the last 2 years following the introduction of direct debit for learn to swim and junior activities alongside the continued growth in health and fitness customers, the work required by the administration team to process them has increased considerably. A review will be carried out to explore the options for continuing to process the direct debits in house compared to using a third party company to carry out this function.
- 5.11.5 Whilst there is now a clearer understanding of GDPR and the requirements to ensure compliance, the practical implications of a number of these requirements will be better understood in the coming months. New practices and processes have been and will continue to be introduced to ensure the service is compliant whilst balancing the need to communicate effectively with both existing and potentially new customers. Part of this process will be a major upgrade of our point of sale and booking system – Gladstone MRM. This will not only ensure our software is compliant but will provide a more intuitive and user friendly platform for our receptionists when processing bookings and payments.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

**No**

**6.0 List of Appendices:**

Appendix 9(a) – Leisure Services Performance dashboard

**7.0 Legal considerations:**

None

**8.0 Human Resources considerations:**

None

**9.0 Equalities considerations:**

None

**10.0 Financial considerations:**

None

**11.0 Risk management considerations:**

None

**12.0 Ethical considerations:**

None

**13.0 Internal/External Consultation undertaken:**

None

**14.0 Background papers:**

None