

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Christine Marshall, Executive Director - Commercialisation (S151)

To: Performance Monitoring Panel – 10 November 2020

(Author: Rachel Rowett Community Development Manager)

Subject Swimming Pool & Leisure Facilities Task Group Update

Purpose: To provide Members with an update on the Swimming Pool and Leisure Centre

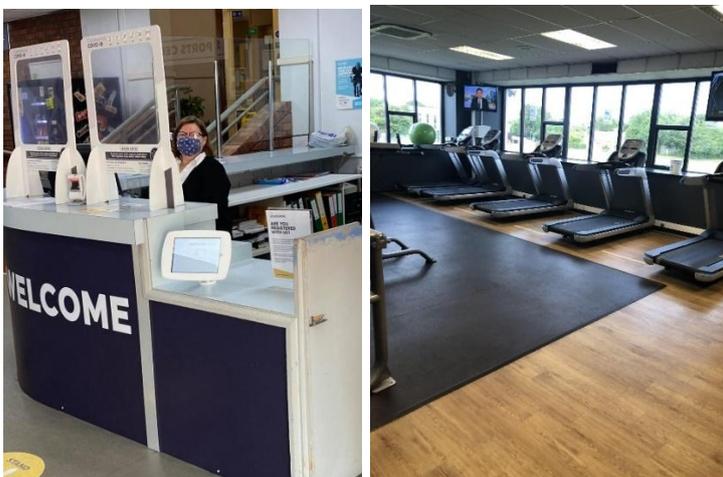
Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the content of the report is noted.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In November 2016 the recommendations from the Final Report of the Swimming Pool and Leisure Facilities Contract Task Group were approved by the Cabinet. Since 16th May 2017 six monthly progress updates on the recommendations were given to Performance Monitoring Panel. The last update was given on 11th September 2019 and covered the first six months of the contract.
- 1.2 The updates given at these meetings cover the measures taken to improve monitoring of the Leisure Contract ensuring the continued improvement in cleanliness and maintenance and including contractual action taken and remedial action that has been put in place.
- 1.3 Monthly contract meetings take place to review significant areas across the contract including health & safety, customer feedback, staffing, performance, corrective action and safeguarding.
- 1.4 Regular site inspections take place to monitor contract compliance and service standards.
- 1.5 In 2018 the Leisure Contract went through a competitive tender process. The Tender was won by Parkwood Leisure who took over the Leisure Management Contract on 1st March 2019.
- 1.6 The revised contract has clear specifications on cleanliness, maintenance and staffing levels. It has robust sanctions and penalties that can be used if needed.
- 1.7 **Impact of COVID-19**
 - 1.7.1 As a result of Government instruction the facilities closed to the public on March 20th and remained closed until approval to re-open was granted from 25th July. Some activities were and remain restricted but a phased approach to reopening has been carried out over the past three months.

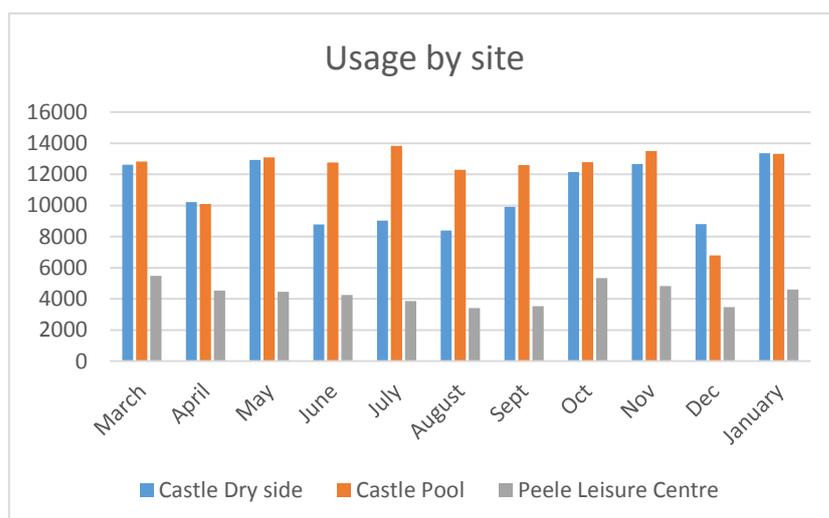
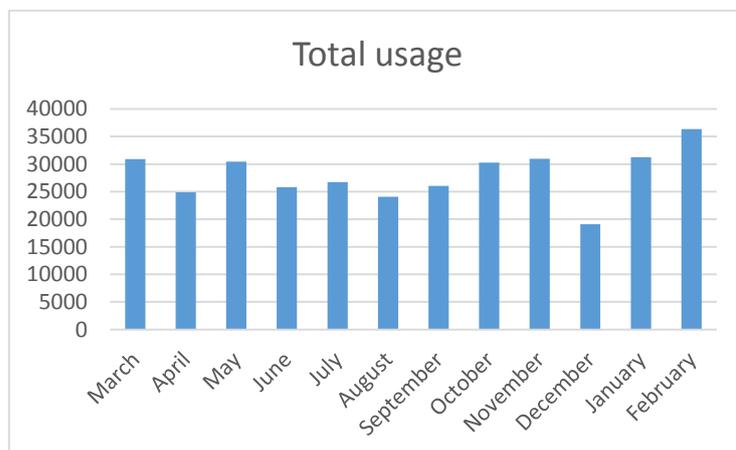
- 1.7.2 The café in Castle Sports Centre, which is a separate franchise and not part of the contract, operated throughout lockdown providing a delivery service to the local community. It re-opened as a café when the centre re-opened on 25th July.
- 1.7.3 Initial re-opening was for the gym and fitness classes only. When Government Guidelines allowed and could be met, the swimming pool re-opened on 1st September for lane swimming, aqua-aerobics and swim clubs.
- 1.7.4 Indoor Bowls resumed on the 7th September, however since then the Indoor Bowls National Governing Body guidance has stated that league matches will not recommence until January 2021.
- 1.7.5 There are strict guidelines which Parkwood must comply with to ensure the Leisure Centres are Covid-secure. The gym equipment has been spread out to ensure 2m social distancing is maintained. A gym overflow area has been created utilising part of the sports hall. All members must pre-book slots to enable the team to manage numbers within the building.
- 1.7.6 An enhanced cleaning regime has been introduced and users must wipe down all equipment after use. Social distancing signage and sanitiser stations have been placed throughout the buildings. A Safer, Happier, Healthier marketing and branding campaign was developed to deliver the key messages around changes to the operation of the facilities.
- 1.7.7 During the closure some additional maintenance took place and a new sports hall floor has been installed.



1.8 Participation Pre-Covid

1.8.1 In February 2020 Parkwood recorded their highest participation levels so far, with a 31% increase in usage at the Swimming Pool and 9% increase in usage at the Dry side compared to March 2019.

1.8.2 Total usage figures for February 2020 were 13,718 at Castle Dry Side, 16,824 at Castle Swimming Pool and 5,791 at Peele Leisure Centre



1.8.3 In December 2019, closures took place for essential maintenance in the swimming pool and at all sites for Christmas opening hours. Considering this, together with seasonal trends and school holidays, the usage figures were higher than expected.

1.8.4 Included in the overall usage is a wide range of clubs that use the facilities.

| ACTIVITIES | | | |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Dryside | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 |
| Table Tennis | 472 | 437 | 639 |
| 5 a-side Football | 720 | 768 | 996 |
| Volleyball | 105 | 75 | 180 |
| Other Sports | 790 | 567 | 1,138 |
| Roller Disco | 960 | 720 | 964 |
| Schools | 140 | 98 | 263 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Spinning (All) | 1,024 | 1,015 | 1,279 |
| Gym inductions | 49 | 91 | 163 |
| GP referral new | 84 | 62 | 95 |
| Group Training | 2,003 | 1,961 | 2,009 |
| Bowls Users | 3,927 | 4,018 | 9,536 |
| Fencing | 75 | 67 | 85 |

1.8.5 The above table shows the range of clubs and activities available at the Dry Side. These demonstrate an encouraging increase across the first year of the contract.

1.8.6 In particular, Spalding Indoor Bowls Club continues to go from strength to strength with the Centre hosting the national under 25's bowls final in January 2020.

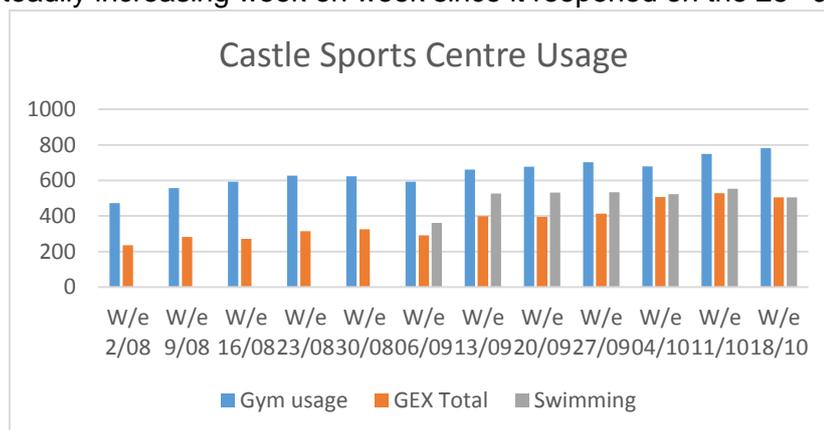
1.8.7 Since the last report the new Virtual Spin Studio has been installed with new spin bikes. Spin classes are intense high speed indoor cycling classes on static bikes. This attracted a lot of positive press interest with reporters from Spalding Guardian, and BBC Radio Lincolnshire attending the site and reporting on the improvements. The Spin Studio has contributed to the increase in spin class attendees shown above, and this continued in January 2020 with over 100 users taking part in Virtual Spin classes.

1.8.8 Membership sales exceeded all targets in January 2020 and total membership across all three sites continued to increase into February.

1.9 Participation Post-lockdown

1.9.1 When the centres closed in March memberships were frozen. When the centres reopened members were given the option to keep their membership frozen as not all the facilities could be used. Occupancy levels across the sites were also reduced to ensure government guidelines were met.

1.9.2 Gym, group exercise and casual swimming participation at the Castle Sports Centre has been steadily increasing week on week since it reopened on the 25th July 2020.



1.9.3 September 2020 was the first full month with all sites open. Total usage at the Castle Sports Centre for September was 10,918. This demonstrates a 51% decrease on the same period in 2019 however it should be noted that not all activities have been able to resume currently, and as referenced above, capacity has been reduced to meet Government guidelines.

1.9.4 Membership sales are steadily increasing with a 35% increase in September 2020 compared to August 2020.

1.9.5 In a recent survey sent out to members across all Parkwood sites with frozen membership, fear of catching Covid 19 was the main reason given for not reinstating their membership.

1.9.6 Parkwood continues to actively promote the new covid secure systems in place to encourage users to return.

1.10 **Contract Monitoring**

1.10.1 The service delivery is monitored through monthly reports provided by Parkwood which are discussed at monthly meetings. Quarterly reports are also provided and quarterly contract meetings are held with Senior Management.

1.10.2 Monthly inspections are carried out in line with the Contract Management Manual with specifies different areas to focus on each month. Each inspection covers cleanliness levels, general maintenance and staff. These are interspersed with focussed inspections around maintenance, service delivery, health and safety and compliance. Currently there is a key focus on cleanliness and compliance with covid regulations.

1.10.3 Inspections take place randomly and Parkwood are not informed when they will take place. The Duty Manager accompanies the council staff during the visit and where possible deals with any identified issues straight away.

1.10.4 A range of different staff attends the inspections depending on the focus, this allows for specialist points of view around maintenance and health and safety. This is also beneficial as different people see different things and are able to provide a view from a fresh perspective.

1.10.5 After each inspection a report is written and sent to Parkwood managers with a list of actions. The report includes a scoring system that contributes to the monitoring of the contract and low scoring would incur penalties.

1.10.6 Castle Sports Centre and Swimming Pool are inspected monthly; Peele Leisure Centre is inspected quarterly.

1.10.7 On average 3-5 actions come out of the inspections that are usually minor points around housekeeping, or maintenance issues. In the last inspection of the Castle Dry side there were no actions required and cleanliness throughout was excellent.

1.11 **Availability**

1.11.1 In November 2019 there was a half-day closure of the learner pool due to the pool readings not being within the required parameters. This was quickly addressed.

1.11.2 In December 2019 both pools were closed for 8 days to allow for essential maintenance to the pool filters. This closure was slightly longer than originally intended as it took time for the pool temperature to return to a suitable level. This coincided with the Christmas closure which meant the pools were unavailable from 16th - 27th December. Staff used this time to carry out cleaning and general maintenance as well as staff training.

1.11.3 All centres closed on 20th March 2020 following Government instruction and remained closed until 25th July 2020.

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 Do nothing

2.2 Note the contents of this report.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and that members of the Performance Monitoring Panel have assurances that the management of the leisure contract has strengthened and with a new management company and contract in place the facilities have improved.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 A new management company and improved contract monitoring will result in an improved service with increased customer satisfaction and increased usage figures.

4.2 Improved and more detailed reporting giving assurances of performance monitoring of the contract.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.1 Contracts

5.1.1 A 5 year contract is in place with Parkwood Leisure.

5.1.2 Information from the task group recommendations has informed the development of the new contract specification.

5.1.3 A new contract manual has been produced to enable clear and effective monitoring of the contract.

5.1.4 A report was presented to Full Council on 29 July 2020 to consider and provide feedback on a decision to be taken by the Leader of the Council in respect of the contractual position and range of potential options for the leisure management contract. This was restricted by virtue of paragraph (s) 3,5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

5.2 Corporate Priorities

5.2.1 The provision of a Leisure offer contributes to the Council's Corporate Priorities of:

- Your Place – Lead, enable and embed the provision of a range of improved local community, cultural, arts, and newly contracted leisure facilities that support the enhanced wellbeing of South Holland's communities
- Your Health & Wellbeing – Target our leisure facilities to provide a programme of activities to tackle obesity and inactivity in South Holland.

5.3 Financial

5.3.1 There is a robust contract performance mechanism in the contract. Financial penalties can be applied if there is poor performance.

5.3.2 On 22nd October 2020, the Government announced that additional funding would be available for local authority run leisure centres. At the time of writing, the details of this funding are yet to be released. Updates will be provided to Members once these are available.

5.4 Risk Management

5.4.1 Health & Safety management is reported in monthly reports provided by Parkwood and discussed in the contract meetings.

5.4.2 A full health and safety inspection is scheduled to be carried out every six months by the Council's contract manager, Health & Safety Manager and a member of the Property & Assets team.

5.4.3 Parkwood has provided additional Covid Secure operational risk assessments.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 Services are provided for all those living, working or visiting the district.

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 None used

Background papers: - Final Report of the Swimming Pool and Leisure Facilities Contract Task Group.

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Discretionary Service

Appendices attached to this report: None