

New Leisure Operator Introduction and Presentation

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| Executive Portfolio Holder: | Cllr Mike Best, Health and Wellbeing |
| Strategic Director: | Nicola Hix, Director – Strategy and Support Services |
| Service Manager: | Brendan Downes, Lead Specialist, People, Performance and Change, Strategy and Commissioning |
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Purpose of the Report

1. This report is submitted for information and summarises the background to the appointment of the Council's new leisure operator, Freedom Leisure, and provides an overview of the presentation content to be made to members at committee.
2. Members are invited to ask any questions of Freedom Leisure personnel or the Portfolio Holder.

Public Interest

3. The operation of the Council's indoor facilities in Yeovil and Wincanton and Chard is managed by a specialist leisure operator, Freedom Leisure. The Council is interested in receiving periodic reports from the operator to ensure that they are delivering against agreed contract outcomes and maintaining a high quality leisure provision for residents, both within the centres and the wider community.

Recommendations

That Council :-

- a. Note and comment on the presentation.

Background

4. In April 2021, South Somerset District Council and DX formally approved the appointment of Wealden Leisure (trading as Freedom Leisure) as the Council's new leisure operator for the next 15 years, following a competitive tender process.
5. Freedom Leisure is a genuine not for profit organisation with HMRC approved exempt charity status. Freedom Leisure currently manage 106 facilities for 24 council partners, schools and academies and have a good record of accomplishment.
6. The leisure contract is expected to deliver the following key outcomes:



South Somerset District Council

- a. Enhanced leisure centres by April 2022, through the Council investing capital in the centres using the expertise and knowledge of the contractor, which will provide more fit for purpose facilities for the next fifteen years and beyond including the new Chard Leisure Centre facility
 - b. Increases in participation at the leisure centres to more than 550,000 visits per annum, particularly from target groups, including people with disabilities, women and girls, young people, BME groups and older people
 - c. Improvements to customer satisfaction which will result in repeat visits
 - d. Improvements in health, such as a reduction in the number of people with diabetes, obesity levels or people who smoke
 - e. A partnership approach to delivery, reviewing performance and refining delivery to meet the needs of South Somerset residents
7. Performance monitoring reports are provided by Freedom Leisure utilising mutually agreed KPI's and metrics. These are reviewed quarterly by the contract manager and finance specialist together with the Freedom team and any corrective measures agreed.
 8. Performance and delivery plans (including the Active Community Plan) will be reviewed by a strategic review group every 6 months. This group will include the Director for Strategy, Commissioning and Support Services, Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, Property Specialist and the Healthy Self Reliant Communities COP lead.
 9. An executive report will be presented to members by Freedom Leisure on an annual basis. This report will look at past performance but also allow members to shape delivery plans for the forthcoming year.

Report Detail – Overview of Presentation

10. Freedom Leisure personnel deliver a PowerPoint presentation to members covering the following:
 - a. Introduction to Freedom Leisure
 - b. Performance in the first quarter and current direction of travel
 - c. Overview of:
 - i. Active Community Programme
 - ii. Capital works planned at Goldenstones, Wincanton Sports Centre and Weslands Sport and Leisure centre
 - iii. Opening of the new Chard Leisure Centre
 - d. Members questions

Financial Implications

11. There are no new financial implications.

Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers

12. There are no new legal implication in connection with this report.

Council Plan Implications

13. The effective management of the Council's leisure centres contributes to Council Plan aim to "improve health and reduce health inequalities" and to help the Council "to build healthy, self-reliant, active communities" by:

Helping people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

14. The investment proposals put forward by Freedom Leisure are projected reduce carbon emissions by a minimum of 269 tonnes per annum. Officers will use Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant funding to further improve energy efficiency and carbon emissions at the leisure sites, but the precise impact of the potential additional measures are not yet known.

Equality and Diversity Implications

15. No new implications.

Privacy Impact Assessment

16. Completed.

Background Papers

Reports to District Executive – December 2020 and April 2021