

REPORT TO STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16th March 2023

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

COUNCILLOR PARKHOUSE, PH FOR LEISURE & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. Issues relating to achieving the Council's published priorities
1. Bringing Leisure in house- we brought Leisure back into council control during the pandemic. We have more control over operations and customer service but the sector nationally is currently going through a difficult period due to a combination of factors (see 'issues that may impact services' below).
2. Live and Move- our Sport England pilot is working to increase Physical Activity in areas where residents are less physically active, however, it was impacted by lockdown when staff needed to redirect energy to supporting residents.
3. Green Circle- in conjunction with Live and Move the 13 mile Green Circle is now featured on the free walking app, Go Jauntly and we've identified five shorter walks within it. Work is being undertaken to improve signage and accessibility.

2. Update or commentary on any major ongoing programmes of work
1. Live and Move- we have a renewed strategy for Live and Move which is working to increase Physical Activity in areas where residents are less physically active. The Inclusive Exeter partnership has proven very successful in getting BAME communities more active. The This Girl Can programme at Wonford was also very popular with residents.
2. Leisure membership- we achieved the Exeter Leisure membership target of 10,000 members which was originally a 3 year target.
3. NHS Staff Physical Activity Programme- In December, in conjunction with Live & Move, we ran a 6 week programme with the NHS, encouraging the NHS workforce into physical activity. 234 people were enrolled on the programme, with sessions specifically designed to fit around NHS shift patterns to encourage participation.
4. Playing Pitch Strategy- We successfully moved our Exeter Playing Pitch through Executive and Council in 2022. The Exeter Playing Pitch Strategy provided an important evidence base for the Exeter Local Plan and demonstrated the Council's commitment to improving

playing pitches across the city and provided a framework for partnership working and delivering on the outlined priorities.

5. Issues that may impact : services delivery/financial performance/future budget requirements

1. **Energy prices-** energy is one of the biggest costs for the sector due to the high amount of energy required to run sites especially heating swimming pools.
2. **Staffing difficulties-** there is a shortage of swimming instructors and lifeguards nationally and we are not immune.
3. **Customer service-** due to the staffing difficulties we often face staff shortages, this can impact on the customer service we offer.
4. **Aging Stock-** aside from St Sidwell's Point, the majority of the Leisure Stock is aging and in need of repairs.

6. Potential changes to services/provisions being considered

1. **Concessions to memberships-** previously the memberships were so low that we didn't consider concessions, however, with the recent price increase we will consider whether we can introduce concessionary memberships to those in receipt of benefits.
2. **Repairs to Leisure stock-** we submitted an application to the Government's decarbonisation fund to address some of the repairs needed.
3. **12 week wellbeing programme-** building on the success of our NHS Staff Physical Activity Programme, we will be using a similar model to pilot a 12 week wellbeing programme.