

TITLE: New District Leisure Centre: Mobilisation Issues

Committee: Community Services Committee

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1. ISSUE

- 1.1. To outline the proposed approach to mobilisation and operation of the new leisure centre.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Members will be aware that the new district leisure centre ('the Hive') is scheduled for completion and opening next spring. It will replace Paradise Pool, which will close.
- 3.2. The closure of Paradise Pool, the opening of The Hive, and the change of management contractor - from Everyone Active at Paradise to GLL at The Hive - raises a number of practical issues. The purpose of this report is to briefly examine these considerations.

4. ARGUMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. The issues for consideration can be broadly grouped as follows:
 - 4.1.1. Building handover – essentially this revolves around premises management issues such as pool plant, cleaning regimes, alarm and security systems, and IT systems.
 - 4.1.2. Business transfer – this area will revolve around customer and employee relations, most obviously in relation to TUPE provisions and related issues.
 - 4.1.3. Closure arrangements – this concerns the safe and proper disposal of operational materials, business records and equipment from Paradise Pool, the decommissioning of plant, and securing the site

- 4.1.4. Achieving service and strategic outcomes - This is likely to be reflected in a range of issues, including operational management arrangements, usage arrangements such as programming and pricing, service quality standards, etc.
- 4.2. The underpinning for these various arrangements is provided partly by the respective leisure management agreements for the two sites; and more informally by the early engagement of GLL with the design and construction process, and by the strength of the working relationships between the different parties. SLM as the outgoing contractor at Paradise are also pivotal to this process, and informal discussions have already taken place. There is no reason at present to anticipate any particular difficulties in this respect.
- 4.3. The handover and mobilisation of service for the new building can be planned in detail, and much of it is essentially technical. Like all of the major contractors, GLL have prior experience both of launching new facilities, and taking over contracts, and have a methodology for this which was submitted as part of their tender bid. That submission also identified key risks, and this analysis will be reviewed by officers with the key GLL managers over the winter period. The process will also be informed, to an increasing degree, by their engagement in the construction.
- 4.4. The most critical business transfer issues are covered by TUPE provisions; and the different facility-mix of the two sites (there is no gym or dryside facility at Paradise) limits the scope of any commercial conflicts; but some business transfer elements may require a degree of negotiation. This could include arrangements for the training and transfer of staff between the two sites - particularly if Paradise Pool remains open throughout the mobilisation period for the Hive – and the treatment of memberships and swimming class data. Some initial discussions have taken place at operational level, but these will need to be developed further over the next two or three months. Officers will seek to ensure that any issues are resolved without affecting staff, customers or the efficiency of the opening process. Officers are currently of the view that a modest interval between the closure of Paradise and the opening of the Hive may be helpful, but this will require further examination.
- 4.5. The essential framework with regard to the service and strategic outcomes is provided by the service specification and related documentation to the leisure management agreement. In summary, the service specification defines the required outcome and performance standards for each of 26 service elements, which can be broadly grouped under the headings of service management, facility management and business process; and establishes planning and reporting processes to ensure that the standards are achieved. It also sets core requirements in terms of opening hours, pool programming and pricing. The documentation is based on a template developed by Sport England in consultation with the industry, with appropriate but significant amendments to reflect our specific context. Perhaps more importantly, the service specification identifies core strategic themes and objectives – for example with regard to usage profile, participation levels, partnership development and service quality - and invites the operator to define how those themes and objectives will be

addressed. Further discussions around these issues, and the associated monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, will be held with the operator over the coming months.

- 4.6. Members will note that much of the above remains work in progress. This is to be expected at this stage. Officers will bring update reports to this Committee as the work proceeds prior to the opening of the new facility.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. There are no financial implications arising from this strategy at this stage.
- 5.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out for the leisure centre project in November 2016. Nothing in these arrangements is expected to change this assessment.

Background documents

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