

**LEISURE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE  
Executive Director of Delivery**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the Overview & Scrutiny Panel with an update regarding the progress of the Leisure Transformation project and the contract management of Everyone Active.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 **That the Panel note the measures in place to effectively manage the contract with Everyone Active.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has requested a report on the status of the Leisure partnership with Everyone Active.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Not applicable

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 The management and operation of Bracknell Leisure Centre (BLC), Coral Reef Waterworld (CR) and Downshire Golf Complex (DGC) transferred to Everyone Active (EA) on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018, following a rigorous transformation review and procurement process.
- 5.2 The outsourcing of the management of these three sites eliminates the Leisure subsidy and avoids potential service cuts as a result. The Council now receives a guaranteed monthly management fee from Everyone Active for the duration of the contract.
- 5.3 Following the recently agreed capital investment at BLC of £2.8m there will be an increase in the management fee from April 2019 which is in excess of the council's "invest to save" criteria. This means not only will the proposals greatly increase the quality at Bracknell Leisure Centre but the council will be in a beneficial revenue position once all capital costs have been accounted for.
- 5.4 The investment at BLC will improve the centre's fitness offer with a larger gym, all new gym equipment, additional studio space, plus refurbished changing, café and reception areas, and exterior improvements to the appearance of the building.
- 5.6 Early performance of the contract has been varied. In the main the transition to EA management was relatively smooth at CR & DGC. A key challenge at CR related to EA's software system which required adapting for the operation. EA have since gone live with a different online ticketing solution for Coral Reef which is much more

advanced. This should mean less online booking queries are directed to site, leading to a reduction of telephone calls to site. DGC has continued to perform well although as expected is very susceptible to the weather.

- 5.7 EA experienced more challenges at Bracknell Leisure Centre than anticipated, which resulted in some negative feedback from customers. As a result the Director of EC&C raised the council's concerns directly with EA's Managing Director. The contributing factors to these challenges have been varied, and not all under EA's control, but at the time of writing EA have made progress in a number of areas which is starting to have a more positive impact on the customer experience, customer feedback and staff morale.
- 5.8 Additional measures were introduced in order to respond to the challenges being experienced, which included:
- Weekly update meetings held between EA's Area Contract Manager and BFC's Head of Leisure
  - Summary of complaints received by EA being shared with BFC on a weekly basis
  - EA engaging more directly with dissatisfied customers
  - Engagement sessions (7 sessions) provided during July to introduce and discuss the BLC improvement works with customers. These sessions also gave the opportunity for customers to directly feedback their views to EA regarding operational issues and concerns
  - Introduction of more robust Head of Department meetings at BLC to ensure the team has more buy-in to what EA expect from their colleagues on site
  - With the General Manager of BLC having left post, EA utilised a number of experienced General Managers and Contract Managers from other sites to support BLC. This support will continue until a new Contract Manager is recruited by EA
  - EA increased their pro-active use of social media in order to keep BLC customers updated of issues and plans
- 5.9 The contract between BFC and EA to manage the three leisure sites makes provision for monitoring the performance of the operator. This is achieved in a number of ways, including:
- Regular meetings between the council and EA to discuss performance and any issues
  - Site monitoring visits by the council to assess areas such as cleanliness, programming, operational procedures
  - Quality Assurance standards that EA will be required to achieve (such as the Quest quality scheme for leisure)
  - Self-monitoring by the operator against service standards stated within the contract
  - Mystery Visits and reports organised by the council to assess the customer experience
  - Quarterly Reports provided by EA providing performance information required by the contract
  - Sight of customer complaints made to EA via their Single Customer View system
  - Annual Reviews and forward planning for the services
  - Access to EA's WAM (Workplace Asset Management) system to have sight of planned and reactive maintenance activities.

A mechanism is also in place to recognise when the operator fails to meet the requirements of the Performance Standards. Failure points can be awarded for a range of specified failures on both a quarterly and annual basis. An accumulation of

performance failures could ultimately lead to a termination of the contract, subject to and in accordance with the provisions of the agreement.

- 5.10 The contract requires a number of performance standards/indicators to be met. The majority of these are quality based, to ensure that management and operations are delivered to specified levels, and that information is provided to the council as required to demonstrate compliance with required standards. EA has also been provided with historic visitor figures, and an aim of the contract is for EA to ensure that participation levels increase year on year. There will need to be an element of establishing baseline figures in this regard, especially for CR in its refurbished guise, and for BLC where the offering will alter as a result of the investment works.
- 5.11 A split of responsibilities is in place within the contract with EA. This determines what the council retains responsibility for, and what EA are responsible for. In simple terms the council retains responsibility for the structure of the buildings, and for the planned/reactive replacement or repair of major items of plant and equipment. EA assumes responsibility for the full management and operation of the facilities, including staffing, programming, utilities and maintenance. Major items of plant and equipment that the council retain responsibility for need to be suitably maintained by EA, to ensure that replacement of any such items by the council is not due to EA's omission to maintain. Hence the council needs to ensure it is suitably planning and budgeting to undertake planned maintenance works on an ongoing basis. Failure by the council to complete works or respond to reactive issues under its responsibility could lead to additional cost to the council if the failure to repair/replace effects provision of services.
- 5.12 As part of the council's agreed Internal Audit Programme, the way in which the council manages the leisure management contract will be audited during Q3 of the current year, scheduled for October. The outcome of this audit will enable the council to ensure that it is progressing in the right direction at a relatively early stage of the contract period with EA.
- 5.13 In terms of visitor numbers, EA submitted within their bid that they would achieve 850,491 visits to BLC, 718,198 visits to CR and 134,021 visits to DGC in year one of the contract. These are very ambitious figures which are notably higher than previous visitor totals.
- 5.14 Overall visitor numbers for each site during Q1 April to June 2018 were:
- Bracknell Leisure Centre 208,703 (184,599)
  - Coral Reef Waterworld 128,943 (n/a)
  - Downshire Golf Complex 29,697 (30,246)

Figures in brackets are from the same period last year, at which point Coral Reef was still closed for refurbishment.

- 5.15 Attendances on junior courses (both wet & dry courses) for each site during Q1 April to June 2018 were:
- Bracknell Leisure Centre 23,502 (26,225)
  - Coral Reef Waterworld 1,413 (n/a)
  - Downshire Golf Complex 1,625 (1,717).

Figures in brackets are from the same period last year, at which point Coral Reef was still closed for refurbishment.

**6      ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

N/A

**7      CONSULTATION**

N/A

Contact for further information

Damian James, Assistant Director Contract Services, Delivery – 01344 351325  
[damian.james@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:damian.james@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Nick Smith, Head of Leisure, Delivery – 01344 355407  
[nick.smith@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:nick.smith@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)