



Report to: Communities Committee, 3rd November 2021

Report of: Corporate Director – Operations, Homes and Communities

Subject: FREEDOM LEISURE – CONTRACT YEAR 5 ANNUAL REPORT (APRIL 2020 TO MARCH 2021)

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Communities Committee notes the content of the Freedom Leisure Annual Report 2020/21, which is due to be presented by members of their senior management team on the evening of the above meeting.

2. Background

- 2.1 The attached annual report 2020/21 (**Appendix 1**) encompasses an overview of the performance of Freedom Leisure during the specified period.
- 2.2 The coronavirus pandemic had an unprecedented impact on the operational performance of the three leisure centres and the work of the Active Communities team. The management team had to endure three separate lockdown periods:
- Lockdown 1 – Facilities closed from 20th March 2020 with Perdiswell Leisure Centre re-opening on 25th July 2020 and St Johns Sports Centre and Nunnery Wood Sports Complex re-opening on the 1st August 2020.
 - Lockdown 2 – All three leisure centres closed from 5th November 2020 re-opening on the 2nd December 2020.
 - Lockdown 3 - All three leisure centres closed from 5th January 2021 re-opening on the 12th April 2021.
- 2.3 The Contracts and Performance Manager attends quarterly meetings with representatives from Freedom Leisure to discuss the content of their quarterly performance reports.
- 2.4 Freedom Leisure's performance is also monitored via a performance framework including issues such as income, active participation, sales, membership attrition, statutory compliance, community engagement and financial investment.
- 2.5 Building inspections, spot checks and mystery visits also form part of the contract monitoring process undertaken by Council Officers.

3. Implications

3.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

Due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic Freedom Leisure are still in their Business Recovery phase and continue to receive support from the Council. In 2020/21 they received a payment of £100k from the Government NLRF (National Leisure Recovery Fund) and a further £220k from the Council.

3.2. Legal and Governance Implications

None identified as a direct result of this report.

3.3 Risk Implications

The impact of the pandemic continues to affect Freedom Leisure's business recovery and any further lockdowns throughout the autumn/winter period may require further financial support from the Council.

3.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

None identified as a direct result of this report.

3.4 Equality Implications

None identified as a direct result of this report.

3.5 Human Resources Implications

None identified as a direct result of this report.

3.6 Health and Safety Implications

Freedom Leisure reviewed their risk assessments for each facility and have implemented a number of risk control measures such as providing sanitiser stations, installing protective screens on the reception and café serveries, reducing capacity limits/ratios for the gym, swimming and group exercise classes as well as introducing a significantly enhance cleaning programme.

3.7 Social, Environmental and Economic Implications

None identified as a direct result of this report.

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Appendix 1: Freedom Leisure Annual Report – 2020/21