

**LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT MONITORING BOARD
MINUTES**

Date of Meeting: 11 November 2013
Location: Committee Room 2
Time: 7.15 pm
Attending:
Councillors: Mrs E Webster (Chair) (EW)
W Breare-Hall (WBH)
Gavin Chambers (GC)
Jon Whitehouse (JW)
EFDC Qasim Durrani, Assistant Director (QD)
A Clear (Manager responsible for monitoring the contract) (AC)
Jade Blunnie (Support Officer) (JB)
S Forster (Minutes)
SLM: K Bames (SLM Contract Manager) (KB)
L Woodford (Manager at Loughton Leisure Centre) (LW)

		Action
1.	Apologies for Absence - Cllr Neville Wright, Duncan Jefford	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting 29 August 2013 - Agreed	
3.	<p>Matters Arising -</p> <p>P1: AC had sent the Epping visit report to members of the Board.</p> <p>P2: AC had also forwarded the GP referral information requested by EW. GC asked what criteria GPs use when referring patients to the scheme. KB replied that all the doctors in the area have the relevant forms, which follow national guidelines. SLM are not encouraged to be pro-active in signing up patients, and a GP's referral is required in any event. There is an A5 leaflet which gives the basic details of the criteria used, and KB will ensure that every surgery has a supply, and will send a copy to members of the Board. AC said that Epping and Ongar referrals have increased substantially in the first six months of this financial year, whilst WAP numbers have gone down. EW was not surprised, as although there is a designated person present at W/A the turnover of doctors is high. However the situation may improve now that the surgery has been taken over by The Limes.</p> <p>P3: AC had established that Facilities Management (FM) had been instructed to spend the money on the Epping car park as it had already been carried forward twice. However, following Board intervention it will now be carried forward again.</p> <p>4. Financial appraisal of contract</p> <p>AC: P1 gives an overview of how the contract has performed over the first six months of this financial year. The good news is that, with SLM reclaiming VAT (which is classed as income), EFDC is on track to receive almost £5k of income share. Epping are slightly under the tender price and Ongar are considerably down. Loughton and W/A are both well above the original tender figure.</p> <p>JB had produced some trial pie charts which give the same information as P1 but in a different format, and these were handed out. One chart shows what was predicted by tender, and the other what has actually been achieved. JB said that although the graphs were a little basic at the moment, if the Board is agreeable she will improve on them for future meetings.</p> <p>AC: Loughton accounts for 46% of income, W/A 20%, Ongar 18% and Epping</p>	KB

16%, and at the moment income is going well against the tender figure.

Ps 2-5 break down the figures by site, and the box on the front page gives a summary of this information.

P6 gives the first six months' income by group since the beginning of the contract, and this is up again over last year. Community Leisure, the charity arm of the company, and fitness and health are up whilst food & beverage is slightly down. The bottom table shows the income comparison of the 3 main income earning areas, which is still accounting for almost 68% of total income.

Ps 7-10 show the annual income by site. The lines highlighted 'a' show that fitness swimming is linked to fun swimming, now entitled Casual Swimming, and the two figures should be added together. Lines highlighted 'b' should also be added to show the total income for swimming lessons following the introduction of direct debits for swimming. Loughton's figure at the start of the contract of £149k has increased significantly to £267k.

Lines highlighted 'c' show that vending sales are declining slowly at all sites, with Ongar dropping the most (P9). KB said that although the machines are stocked with top brands, it is not surprising in the current economic climate that secondary spends fall off, but this may improve in time. EW had visited Zinc (?) in Ongar, and had discussed the lack of public transport. Negotiations had taken place between County and the NHS about running a bus service into the centre, but as the Clinic did not open County could not justify a bus service outside of busy hours. EW will discuss the transport problem with Chris Overend to see if there could be some liaison with Zinc.

AC: the lines highlighted 'd' show the DD and annual payments for gym use. In 2010 this accounted for about 42% of income, it is now over 46%.

On P9 the line marked 'e' shows Sports School, the dry sports classes at Ongar, which have dropped dramatically since the start of the contract. KB said that this is being addressed. Sessions are being run for under 5's, which is the group that seems to be hit the hardest. The youth centre, which is on the same campus, also has children's activities. SLM are linking in with a company called 'Fit for Sport' who run all-day camps, and will carry out all the marketing and branding on SLM's behalf, giving them a percentage of the income. The scheme ran well in the summer holidays and will hopefully develop in the future. There is also a Crazy Kids Café in Ongar Town Centre which has soft play equipment.

5. **Contract Monitoring**

(a) Facilities Management P11 shows membership numbers for October (as a guide) since the start of the contract. The total is higher than last year due to the increase in DDs and junior membership, which is increasing as free membership is included for those paying by DD. Free public swimming is also included, which affects the public swimming figures on Ps 12/13. GC reminded KB that SLM were going to approach the Council about increasing public swimming times. KB said that a proposal is being prepared and will be completed by the end of the week.

Ps 12/13 show usage comparisons by site since the start of the contract.

Surprisingly, other than at Epping, group exercise numbers have not increased over the same period last year. Only Loughton is showing a real increase in casual fitness over last year, and LW said that the timetable at Loughton had been changed because customers were struggling to get to the classes as they had been scheduled.

At Epping badminton and squash have both picked up in the last year. KB said

that some of the clubs have cancelled their bookings in the main hall and this has been opened up to public bookings for netball and badminton in the evenings. Customers have responded well to the extra time to play, and the new lines and lights have helped. If fully booked out, the income remains the same as when the clubs were present.

GP referrals have increased significantly at Epping and Ongar. GC said it would be useful to have a breakdown of where they originated. KB keeps records of the surgeries that refer the patients, and will circulate the details for the last quarter as soon as possible.

KB

Public swimming paid at reception has declined at Loughton whilst remaining fairly static at Ongar and W/A, but as reported previously this does not give an accurate indication of the number of people actually in the pool. KB has endeavoured to carry out a survey, asking customers who pay by DD what facilities they use. She will collate the figures and send to the Board to give them a snapshot of where customers go once they have swiped their cards.

KB

(b) Health & Safety No H&S visits have been carried out since the last meeting but they are due to take place shortly and the results will be forwarded on.

AC

(c) Asset Management Three of the centres have been visited since the last meeting and the results are shown on Ps 14-25. Loughton's visit is scheduled for next week. No improvement notices have had to be issued as a result of the visits, and all the information requested by FM has been returned.

EFDC have recently had the Display Energy Certificates (DECs) renewed, which is an annual requirement. A typical score is 100, and Epping's was an impressive 83, W/A's a rather surprising 93, Ongar's 165 and Loughton's, the least efficient, 242. LW has carried out some investigations, and reported that although some changes were made to the building management system costs are still rising year on year and it is difficult to make a comparison as the recent survey was different and more in depth than in previous years.

AC said that many aspects of the centres are taken into account, including the size of the buildings, footfall etc. The person who carried out the survey will put forward a number of options for improvement including the provision of pool covers and light sensors, which although would undoubtedly lower the energy rating it is not known how long it would take for the savings to pay for the costs involved. At GC's request AC will forward the results and recommendations for all sites.

AC

KB will try to gather some information from centres in other contracts of a similar size and customer attendance to make some comparisons. She said that is in the company's interests to save energy, and therefore costs, and SLM is linked to the Carbon Trust. Each site is given a separate target and if this is exceeded the company is fined.

KB

AC: FM monitor the work that SLM have promised to undertake. Under the terms of the contract the Council is responsible for some building maintenance, mainly external, and FM have carried out a number of jobs since the last meeting. These include:

Epping - external decoration and repairs to the centre and Hemnall Street offices. Also the replacement of lead which had been stolen from the roof.

Ongar – preservation treatment and decoration to outside doors, timber and cladding. Two gates to the playing fields are to be replaced, and the street lights

will be serviced and cleaned.

W/A – a new footpath to the rear fire doors was laid as it was dangerous to walk there in the dark. Also UPVC cladding was mounted on the gable ends as the timber was rotten, and the fencing around the site treated with preservative. The roof will shortly be patch repaired as the leaks have got substantially worse in the last 12 months.

Loughton – no planned works have been carried out yet, but maintenance work on the roof will be carried out after Christmas once FM have established if there are still any leaks. The drains and gullies will also be jetted.

In response to WBH's question AC said that the biggest jobs yet to be tackled other than the roof are the pool hall windows at W/A where the surrounds to the huge panes of glass are rotting and the air handling is falling apart. There have been no leaks at Epping yet this year, but the sports hall floor, which is still safe but over 40 years old, will need replacing soon. FM may re-line the car park but if they consider that it will not require re-surfacing again next year, now that the Board have become involved they will be happy to carry it forward for yet another year.

The audit accounts for SLM, and the parent company Castlevue Ventures Ltd. (previously Castlevue Holdings) have been received and sent to Finance to review.

(d) Performance Monitoring Results of the customer service standards visits are shown on Ps 26-28. AC said that generally cleanliness standards at all the sites has improved recently and he has not received a complaint in the last three months. SLM paid for a deep clean of the Loughton centre once the builders had left. LW has reorganised the system and the manager responsible for the cleaning regime is now working hard to make improvements around the building. The results are noticeable, and hopefully the rest of the staff will be encouraged to maintain the high cleansing standards that have now been set.

Very few issues are found at Epping. However, the carpet was looking very shabby and this has now been replaced with one of a more appropriate colour. All the carpet at Ongar was also in a bad condition, and has also been replaced.

No variation orders have been issued.

(e) Improvement/Default Notices Details of notices outstanding from the last meeting and new ones issued are given on P29. There is one new one for Loughton, relating to the fire wall along the viewing gallery, which FM will provide the funds to repair. The fire dampers have now been signed off, and hopefully the new ones issued to Loughton for failure to provide service reports and certificates will be signed off when the maintenance visit is carried out.

6. Liaison groups

With the exception of Loughton there is still a general lack of public interest in the meetings. To tackle this problem at Epping KB said that their customers are to be invited to an informal 'Meet the Manager' evening. Some heads of departments will be available as well as, hopefully, Members and Council representatives. All the meetings are advertised on notice boards at the centres, but WBH suggested trying other forms of communication including email, telephone, Twitter and Facebook.

7. Compliments and Complaints

AC had received only one complaint relating to the gymnastics centre in North

Weald. He was not sure who to report it to as although the building belongs to the Council they have no responsibility for the gymnastics group.

8. Report from SLM

KB circulated the November issue of the Everyone Active contract review. The quiz night at Loughton was hugely successful and raised £655 for Ava's Pink Quest, the charity of the year. Epping is due to host a quiz night on 24 January and Members of the Board were invited to put a team forward.

The new Tabata sessions at Loughton have been well received. The 'Tough Mudder' event that some staff and members of W/A took part in was also successful, and £223 was raised for the charity. £285 was also raised at the McMillan coffee morning held on 27 September.

The company is committed to the Anthony Nolan Trust, which has recently helped to find a donor for a colleague. Members of all the centres are being asked to support them by undergoing a simple test at Loughton on 21 November, between 3-7pm, and going on their register. This will be advertised at all the sites, and all parish and district councillors have been advised. Information can also be found on the Council's website and intranet, and the event will be covered by the BBC. Although other stem cell charities take other age ranges, the Anthony Nolan Trust will only test people between the ages of 16-30.

KB was very pleased to report that the Epping bar will be opening again in the new year. A husband and wife team will be running it as a family business, and are currently asking customers what they would like to see in the bar, and giving them menu choices etc. There will be an opening event, which KB will inform the Board about, and it may be possible to hold meetings there in the future.

9. Any other business

WBH asked what has been planned for the Tour de France when it passes through the district now that the route is known. KB said that, as two SLM contracts are involved, the company will certainly be planning something special but nothing is known at present. EW said that Derek Macnab is also working with County to mark the event, and it may be beneficial for all parties to liaise with one another. She asked KB to keep AC informed of any proposals that SLM put forward.

GC was concerned that the contract renewal date was drawing closer, and asked what the next steps should be. EW said that this would be linked to the new leisure strategy which is currently being planned. She has spoken to the Conservative Group and once the Leisure Panel has some background information about the buildings etc. one or two tours of the centres will be arranged. AC confirmed that he had attended a meeting with Derek Macnab and some information about the contract had been given to him.

10. Date of next meeting

Confirmed post-meeting as 31 March 2014, Committee Room 2.