

LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT - AQUA VALE SWIM AND FITNESS CENTRE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to learn directly from Everyone Active, the council's leisure management contractor, what actions and measures they have implemented recently and/or plan to introduce in the future that will continue to improve the standard of cleanliness and hygiene at Aqua Vale Swim and Fitness Centre, Aylesbury.

2 Recommendations/for decision

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| 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is requested to make any comments and/or observations on this report and to learn directly from Everyone Active of their plans to ensure improved cleanliness and hygiene standards at Aqua Vale Swim and Fitness Centre are delivered consistently. |
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3 Background and Supporting Information

- 3.1 The leisure management contract for the management and operation of the council's two leisure centres (Aqua Vale Swim and Fitness centre, Aylesbury and Swan Pool and Leisure Centre, Buckingham) was awarded to Sport and Leisure Management Ltd, trading as Everyone Active (EA) from April 2013 for an initial period of ten years with an option to extend the contract, by mutual agreement for up to a further five years. Members will recall that EA pay the council approximately £510,000 each year to manage the council's leisure centres.
- 3.2 Formal contract monitoring is undertaken by the AVDC client officer by way of a monthly contract meeting with EA Contract managers and site visit together with ad-hoc contract meetings with the Regional Director of EA. In addition, any complaints received by the council are followed up with EA to ensure that they are resolved in a satisfactory manner. Furthermore, AVDC Environmental Health Officers review the water quality test results obtained by EA if there any concerns regarding the water quality.
- 3.3 Concerns and reports of poor standards of cleanliness do surface from time to time and are usually "nipped in the bud" by EA. However, more recently concerns appeared to be of a recurring nature. Some Elected Members also expressed some concerns at the council meeting in October 2016, and again in December 2016, that there had been negative feedback received regarding Aqua Vale and the poor quality of cleanliness experienced and reported by users. The Cabinet Member for Community, Leisure and Civic Amenities, Cllr Angela Macpherson gave elected members an undertaking to visit Aqua Vale in January and to meet with EA and also extended an invitation to all Councillors to come along and visit Aqua Vale with her in January 2017.
- 3.4 Councillor Macpherson met with the Regional Director of EA and local contract management in December 2016 to discuss her concerns and to seek assurances that quality standards would be greatly improved. An action plan was proposed by EA and agreed by the council to implement a series of immediate actions and improvements.
- 3.5 As a consequence of the poor standards experienced, monitoring of the contract has been stepped up and a significant increase in unannounced site visits now take place to ensure standards continue to improve.

- 3.6 Councillor Macpherson and approximately ten elected members visited Aqua Vale in January 2017 to see first hand the progress made to date and the current state of the centre. Improvements to the standards of cleanliness were clearly apparent and further changes were planned to continue to raise standards in the near future. It is important to note however, that there are no significant cleanliness or service concerns at Swan Pool and Leisure Centre, Buckingham.
- 3.7 Furthermore, an internal audit of contract monitoring is currently underway as part of the audit work programme to review existing arrangements and to seek any best practice recommendations that would strengthen the process and give greater confidence to elected members.
- 3.8 Whilst all of the above may have been done, Councillor Macpherson and Councillor Michael Rand (Chairman of this Committee) have asked EA to attend this Committee meeting to enable elected members to seek on going assurances and to learn directly of their commitment to continuous improvement to cleanliness standards and to ensure customers receive a quality experience on every visit to the centre.
- 3.9 Members of the Committee are asked to forward any particular questions they may have for EA to Democratic Services in advance to enable a full response to be given at the meeting.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

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Files held in Commercial Property and Regeneration