

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - LEISURE CONTRACT

MEETING DATE Thursday, 3 August 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Alistair Morwood (Chair), and Councillors Charlie Bromilow, Doreen Dickinson, June Molyneaux and Mick Muncaster

OFFICERS: Angela Barrago (Health and Wellbeing Manager) and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Debra Platt

17.SFB.10 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 12 July 2017 of Overview and Scrutiny Task Group - Leisure Contract

AGREED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

17.SFB.11 Declarations of Any Interests

No declarations of any interest were received.

17.SFB.12 Interview - Active Nation

Active Nation's Managing Director, Stuart Martin and Operations Director, Kevin Lane attended the meeting to deliver a presentation and answer questions in relation to the council's leisure contract, of which Active Nation was presently responsible for.

Since Active Nation (previously CLS until 2008/09 when it became a charity and rebranded itself to Active Nation) took over the management of the council's leisure facilities in 2005, the leisure landscape had changed due to increased competition and a rise of the budget club sector. Throughout this time Active Nation considered that it was not just a leisure operator but focussed on increased participation for local people, providing a quality leisure provision and innovation in its equipment and ways of working.

Active Nation, which operates across the country, was extending its leisure proposition beyond conventional venues to reach new target participants.

The Task Group was also informed –

- That there was a continued increase in participation (on average of 2.5% increase per year).

- Changes to senior management team in the last three years had enabled Active Nation to progress and develop, which had aided development within Chorley.
- Sponsorship of Chorley Grand Prix.
- Free swimming for local children during summer holidays, which Active Nation had managed for free in 2017.
- Active Nation had begun to move its exercise proposition towards health and wellbeing. Although not rolled out yet in Chorley there were other national examples (Street Monkeys programme and UDevelop) which help people in isolation back into society.
- Active Nation was the holder of UK Active Flame Awards which was a nationally recognised in their Healthy Partnerships working.
- Clayton Green and All Seasons leisure facilities received “Very Good” in a Quest assessment which was part of national award.

In discussing the financial and monitoring aspect of the contract, Action Nation highlighted a number of facts which included –

- Chorley contract returned a surplus of £2,008 in the 2016/17 financial year.
- The charity has a board of trustees rather than shareholders.
- All money was reinvested back into innovation within the charity.
- Salaries to income ratio of 52%.
- Energy cost was 10% of total expenditure.
- Active Nation provided regular reports on a number of aspects including:
 - Participation increase
 - Finance performance
 - NPS scores
 - Accidents including RIDDOR reportable incidents
 - Significant staff changes
- Working with the council, to ensure any price increases were in line with the expectation of local people.

Included in the presentation was a diagram of the management structure for Active Nation. It demonstrated that the Managing Director was responsible to the Board of Trustees all of whom were well known, and very experienced in their particular area of expertise.

Active Nation acknowledged that it faced a number of challenges which included –

- Staffing and culture (jobs vs career)
- New faces meaning lack of continuity
- Significant changes through capital investment
- Budget leisure operators locally
- Being able to implement things quicker

In conclusion, the Task Group was informed that due to the risk involved, and lack of knowledge and experience more and more local authorities were outsource their leisure provision.

Health and wellbeing hubs were currently viewed as the future of the industry, and with new products and innovation Active Nation considered that it would be able to withstand change and pressure from competition locally and nationally.

At the end of the presentation the Chair opened the meeting to receive questions from the Task Group.

In response to a questions regarding to employees the Task Group was informed that

- 141 members of staff were presently employed on either a full-time or part-time/casual basis (following the meeting Active Nation confirmed that the breakdown of 141 members of staff was 28 full time employees and 113 part time/casual hours).
- Active Nation faced challenges when it came to staffing, which was reflected throughout the leisure industry. This was due to mainly young employees seeing their role as a job and not making a career out of it.
- Staff were employed in a wide variety of roles from life guards to Community Engagement Manager.
- A number of activities were in place for Chorley including Brinscall Discovery Day, 1 Million Step Challenge and Sweaty Mama.

The Chair thanked Active Nation representative for attending the meeting before they left the room.

17.SFB.13 Interview - Lancashire Care Foundation Trust

The Chair welcomed Philip Gooden, Service Manager for Lancashire Care Foundation Trust to the meeting to put forward suggestions on how the council could incorporate health and wellbeing services into its leisure facilities.

Members of the Task Group were informed that there was a national trend to deliver some health services/groups outside of the formal setting of doctors' surgeries and hospitals. It was considered that holding informal surgeries/classes/drop-in sessions in the local community would encourage those people in hard to reach groups to take an active responsibility in their health and wellbeing.

The types of sessions that could be offered did not need to be limited to those relating to exercise. Sessions related to mental health would be particularly beneficial in this informal environment, particularly drop-in sessions. However, there was a risk of being overwhelmed but it was important that services providers considered different ways in delivering their sessions.

As a way of promoting health and wellbeing, members of the Task Group were informed that a Health Mela was taking place in September at All Seasons Leisure Centre. Amongst the health and wellbeing initiatives those attending will be able to see a community therapist demonstration and speak to representatives from Mind Matters.

In response to questions raised by the Task Group it was considered likely that the leisure facilities would need to be reconfigures to accommodate the new services at a cost to the council. It was understood that Active Nation was amenable to change and create a hub made accessible for all.

The Chair thanked the Service Manager for Lancashire Care Foundation Trust for attending the meeting and his contribution to the discussion.

17.SFB.14 Date of Next Meeting

AGREED - That the next meeting be confirmed as Thursday, 14 September 2017 at 5pm.

Chair

Date