

Item 15 – Interim Leisure Operator Monitoring Report

The attached report was considered by the People & Places Advisory Committee on 30 November 2023. The relevant Minute extract is below.

People & Places Advisory Committee (30 November 2023, Minute 32)

The Chief Officer for People & Places presented the report, which updated the committee on the performance and monitoring of the interim leisure operator contract with Everyone Active, for the Edenbridge & Sevenoaks Leisure Centres and Lullingstone Park Golf Course. The contract would end in April 2025, and an options report for the contract arrangements would be presented to the committee in 2024.

At the Chairman’s discretion, representatives from Everyone Active gave a presentation regarding their achievements to date.

In response to questions, members were advised that there was no membership data available from before January 2023 for any of the sites. Under data protection legislation, Sencio’s data could not be transferred to the interim operator. The leisure centres had a capacity of roughly 2500 members each, and it was anticipated that membership would grow significantly as January was a popular month for signups. The Edenbridge centre was outperforming historic membership levels; Members noted it faced less competition from other gyms than Sevenoaks Leisure Centre.

The golf course at Lullingstone had lost members to other courses, before it had received improvements. It was anticipated by the operator that these figures would improve, but membership fees were typically seasonal or annual, so this would be delayed slightly. The operator explained that dynamic course pricing had been introduced, which had improved the footfall of casual players that did not hold memberships.

The officer outlined the future process for the leisure centres. A report would present a number of options to members for their feedback and decision. Any procurement process that may result from this decision would invite a cross-party working group to feed into determining the procurement weighting. Members discussed the importance of due consideration by Members towards maintenance during this process.

Members asked questions of clarification of Everyone Active. They heard a breakdown of the marketing strategy for the leisure centres, with key achievements shared from the report and were advised that their marketing plan had been shared with the council. Digital media, in particular internet searches, was a major area of advertising, as were mail-out campaigns, targeted at specific areas and demographics. Members further discussed possible issues surrounding the app-based service, noting the high average

age of Sevenoaks residents. Everyone Active noted that the centre users are supported by onsite staff if they have issues with making a booking.

In response to questions, members were advised that ~80% of staff were previously employed from Sencio, and that of the non-returning staff, most had either found other employment or elected to retire.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That Everyone Active's performance in delivering the interim leisure operator contract for the period April - September 2023, be noted; and that it be recommended to Cabinet that:

- a) Cabinet note the report; and
- b) That Cabinet agree for officers to bring a report to Cabinet providing an update on the provision and procurement process for the leisure facilities currently being managed under the interim leisure operator contract.