

ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

Monday, 10th December, 2018

MEETING OF ACTIVE BELFAST LIMITED BOARD

(Held in the Lavery Room, City Hall)

Attendees

- Directors:** Mr. J. McGuigan (Chairperson)
Councillor Corr
Mr. P. Boyle
Mr. J. Higgins
Mr. C. Kirkwood
Mrs. K. McCullough
Mr. K. O'Doherty
Mr. R. Stewart and
Mr. G. Walls.
- Officers:** Mrs. R. Crozier, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. N. Munnis, Partnership Manager;
Ms. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.
- GLL:** Mr. C. McCallion, Regional Product Manager; and
Ms. J. Pope, Head of Service.

Apologies

An apology was reported on behalf of Mr. G. Kirk, GLL's Regional Director.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 8th October were approved.

Matters Arising

Aquatics Strategy

The Board noted that the twelve-week public consultation process had closed on 12th October. Equality screening was now underway and, subject to the outcome of that process, it was anticipated that the Strategy would be launched early in the 2019/2020 financial year.

Marketing/Communications

The Board noted that marketing opportunities had been discussed at the KPI Working Group meeting on 10th October and at the workshop on 1st November and would be addressed in future GLL marketing reports.

Update on Leisure Transformation Programme

The Director of Neighbourhood Services confirmed that plans for Ballysillan, Loughside, Shankill and Whiterock Leisure Centres had yet to be considered by the Council.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Future Agenda Items

The Board noted that it would, at its next meeting, receive a presentation from GLL on its vision statement and reports on Policy and Procedure Alignment (Emergency Support and BCC/PSNI Public Safety), Tier 2 performance on Public Health Agency Referral Programmes and Tier 2 Performance on 3G Pitch Utilisation and Business Performance. It was agreed that the Partnership Manager would circulate the list of proposed agenda items for March and April, to allow additional time for them to be considered by Directors, and that responses should be forwarded to him by 17th December.

No additional items were proposed by Directors.

Annual Accounts 2016 - 2017

(Mr. D. Moan, Advanced Accounting, attended in connection with this item.)

Mr. Moan informed the Board that the accounts for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending 31st March, 2018 had now been completed. He provided a brief overview of those accounts, which included the company's Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet and recommended that the Board approve them for submission to Companies House and to HMRC before the deadline date of 31st December.

The Board approved the accounts for Active Belfast Limited for the period ending 31st March, 2018.

The accounts were thereupon signed by Mr. McGuigan and Mr. Walls, the Chairperson and the Treasurer of the Board, respectively.

Advance Discussion on Agenda Items

The Board agreed to raise with GLL a number of issues relating to the four reports being presented by GLL, with emphasis being placed on customer attrition rates, which were particularly high for certain centres, and on the sale of new memberships via GLL's website or directly by centre staff.

In the context of the report to be presented on Performance and Contract Compliance, the Partnership Manager undertook, in response to a query from a Director on whether or not the Council underwrote any financial net deficits arising from the operation of Better Gym Belfast and Better Gym Connswater, to obtain for the next Board meeting clarification around the conditions of the contract governing the two facilities, as the relevant financial arrangements sat alongside the core Council contact with GLL, rather than within it.

(Mr. McCallion and Ms. Pope were admitted to the meeting at this point.)

Update on Performance and Contract Compliance

(Prior to this report being presented, the Partnership Manager drew the Board's attention to anomalies in the information relating to absences and casual hours worked, as contained within an appendix, and confirmed that those had either been corrected or were in the process of being verified.)

The Board then considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To confirm receipt from GLL and present the Board with details of the Quarter 2 2018/2019 4 X 4 KPI scorecard performance report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is requested to:

- i. consider the content of the Quarter 2 2018/19 4 X 4 scorecard report, along with the supporting narrative provided by GLL, copies of which have been circulated; and**
- ii. formally record receipt and approval of the report for the purposes of demonstrating contract compliance.**

3.0 Main Report

3.1 The service contract requires that GLL provide the Board with written quarterly service performance reports.

3.2 On 19th April 2018, the Board approved a revised performance report format for 2018/2019. Following submission of the Q1 report in September 2018, the KPI review working group was reconvened to consider further amendments. Additional changes were approved at the ABL Strategic Workshop on 1st November. Final amendments include:

- a) rolling movement comparisons for last quarter, same quarter last year and YTD position;**
- b) the introduction of RAG (Red – Amber – Green) ratings; and**
- c) condensed narrative report to include one feedback report on each of the KPI priority themes (Business, Innovation and Learning, Customer, Operations) rather than a separate sheet for each centre.**

3.3 Work on a RAG rating system is ongoing. In order to present meaningful ratings, the system will require agreement on baselines/targets. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting at which time a proposal will be presented for consideration.

- 3.4 The quarter 2 report has been reformatted to reflect the agreed changes. In order to provide a consistent YTD report, the new KPI's and the revised format has been backdated to the quarter 1 report. The revised Q1 report has been circulated to the Board.
- 3.5 Some cells in the scorecards have been 'hatched out' where the data is not available, normally due to a new data not being recorded in previous years/quarters, or where the provision of a measure is of limited relevance or value. For example, the YTD weekly swim school lessons to swim school membership ratio.
- 3.6 In order to understand the source data and the equations used to calculate the reported data, a KPI definitions paper has been circulated to the Board.
- 3.7 GLL senior officers and the Partnership Manager will attend the Board meeting to provide any additional information or clarification.
- 3.9 Members of the Board were invited to raise any queries about the KPI data with the Partnership Manager in advance of this meeting."

Ms. Pope provided an overview of performance for the quarter and referred to the issue which had been identified in advance in relation to attrition rates. She reported that there was no immediately apparent reason for the higher than average rate for the Grove Wellbeing Centre and the Shankill Leisure Centre and pointed out that GLL was seeking to initiate leaver surveys and monitor other membership data, with a view to identifying any emerging trends. She added that each centre formulated an annual sales/marketing strategy and business plan with the intention of, amongst other things, increasing and retaining memberships.

Mr. McCallion informed the Board that enhancements to GLL's website were due to be completed in the New Year, which would make it more user-friendly for customers in Northern Ireland wishing to take out membership. In terms of the sale of membership by staff within centres, he confirmed that reception and other staff, including Centre Managers, received sales training on an ongoing basis and he accepted that this should have been reflected within the report on Membership Architecture to be considered later in the meeting.

The Board acknowledged receipt of the Performance and Contract Compliance report for the second quarter of 2018/2019 and the associated findings and paid tribute to the work of the KPI Working Group in drafting the current reporting format.

Tier 2 Performance – Olympia Leisure Centre USP Spa

Mr. McCallion submitted for the Board's consideration the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Board on the progress of Spa Experience at Olympia Leisure Centre. This update will cover Quarters 1 and 2 (April – September) of the 2018/2019 financial year

1.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Board is requested to note the update on the Olympia Spa

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Introduction

Summary Of Key Facts	
Opening Hours	Mon – Fri 11.00 a.m. – 8.00 p.m. Sat and Sun 10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three treatment rooms• Sauna• Jacuzzi• Steam Room• Ice Room• Sanarium• 6 x hamann heated beds
Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Olympia Spa Experience opened in late January 2017 and is staffed by locally recruited GLL team members.• The Thermal Suite is available as a membership option for £51.45 per month. Thermal suite sessions are booked in advance and last for up to 3 hours.• The Spa is available to guests on a bookable basis and offers beauty and massage treatments.• Promotional offers are scheduled throughout the year targeting different treatments and client groups.
Pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suburban pricing range• Thermal Suite half day ticket £15 or £7.50 concession.
Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Spa generated £55,708 income during quarters 1 and 2 of 2017/2018. This figure has risen to £75,291 during quarters 1 and 2 of 2018/2019.• Total expenditure for quarters 1 and 2 has risen from £90,600 in 2017/2018 to £98,809 in 2018/2019.

3.2 **Product and Pricing Overview**

3.2.1 **Income Areas**

- **Thermal Suite** - Thermal suite allows for access to the thermal area only for up to 3 hours use and is priced at £15.
- **Spa Membership** - The spa memberships are based upon the £51.45 (Belfast resident) or £56.50 (non resident) direct debit rates and include daily access to the thermal suite. Membership also entitles the members to unlimited access to the gym, pool and classes in all fourteen Better centres. There are 83 prepaid Spa memberships (at 30 September 2018).
- **Spa Treatments** – There are a number of treatments available ranging from £12 - £70. Treatments are tailored for male and female and the team also provide pre-natal massage. The product range used is Elemis. The top Spa Treatment is the Elemis freestyle deep tissue massage.
- **Product Goods For Resale (GFR)** – To help drive income generation and in line with standard industry practice the Better Spa Experience team sell Elemis, La Sultane De Saba and their own in house product called ‘Signature’.

3.2.2 Performance Analysis

People - Three full time equivalent staff employed in the spa and are supported by casual colleagues.

Training – In house signature treatment ‘Crown to Soul’ – team trained by Supervisor Christine McCleave. Elemis product training – also lead by Christine McCleave. 3 new team members all product trained internally by supervisor (and trainer) Christine McCleave

Promotion - Olympia Spa enjoyed a positive first full year in 2017/18 and established a strong client base with the majority of clients booking repeat treatments. As such, further growth is now evident during 2018/19.

Comparisons between two more established Spa’s within the Better Spa Experience group continue to provide reassurance that the financial position will strengthen in the coming years.

The external boulevard is now completed and the removal of the hoardings has enabled the exterior of the centre to be properly showcased and be visible from the Boucher Road. The

customer journey from the completed car park to the centre is shorter and a much more pleasant experience. Internal awareness has been strengthened with window vinyl advertising for directional and promotional purposes. A similar external proposal, intended for the Spa windows, is nearing final sign off with partners.

Performance - £139,483 income was generated by Better Spa Experience in 201/18. This is inclusive of Spa DD membership payments. £55,708 of this income was generated in quarters 1 and 2 of 2017/18 with the remaining £83,775 being generated in the more productive quarters 3 and 4 (October- March).

£75,291 was generated in the first 2 quarters of 2018/19. Income predictions for 2018/19 remain on target to generate the previously noted figure of £179,649.

Usage - 6 month usage (1st April – 30th September 2018) 4,917 users including a range of treatments and thermal Spa usage.

3.2.3 Expenditure Areas:

- **Staffing:** Three full time equivalent staff employed in the spa and are supported by casual colleagues
- **Operations costs:** These include repairs and maintenance (R and M), service contracts, equipment purchase and utilities.
- **R and M** – As a new facility a small budget has been allocated for repairs and maintenance. This acknowledges that the first year is still within the defects liability period of the building contractor.
- **Service contracts** – the laundry provision, including supply and cleaning of towels, robes and flip flops
- **Utilities** – the spa is housed within the main leisure centre and consumption calculations were calculated on 20% of the total annual Olympia utility expenditure (£21,000)
- **Publicity / Marketing** – campaigns and advertising are used to maximise awareness. This was also profiled in accordance with peak months in the spa industry.

3.2.4 Expenditure Analysis

Financial Position 2017-2020:

Year	Income	Expenditure	Variance
2017-18	£139,483	£180,438	-£40,955
2018-19	£179,649	£197,618	-£17,969
2019-20	£204,548	£203,124	£1,424

The overall financial position is forecast to improve by £23K in 2018/2019 and to move towards a surplus by 2019/2020.

3.3 Business Development:

Following completion of the boulevard in June 2018, the business development opportunities of Spa Experience are being enhanced and capitalised upon with external vinyl

installed onto the Spa windows to support the already installed vinyl installed onto the internal office windows.

A number of targeted marketing campaigns promoted by social media and online awareness are focused on increasing income. These will focus on the popular quarterly promotions which are presently in place.

Recruitment of additional therapists has been completed and this has increased overall treatment room utilisation at peak times from 2 to 3 rooms.

Gift packages, presently on offer during November and December, will be made available throughout the year.

Spa membership levels have increased by 33% during quarter 1 and 2 of 2018. Inclusion in global membership offers is intended to further grow this key area of business.”

After discussion, the Board noted the contents of the report.

Tier 2 Performance – Group Exercise Programme Innovation and Development

Mr. McCallion submitted for the Board’s consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Board on the group exercise performance for the Quarter 2 (July- September 2018).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Board is requested to note:

- the YTD comparison update group exercise programme;
- that performance monitoring is in place both locally and nationally;
- the introduction of the ‘Wexer’ system into Better Gym Connswater; and
- changes to the programme at Olympia and resulting impact

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Introduction:

3.1.1 Fitness class access is included as part of the better membership package.

3.1.2 203 group exercise classes are delivered every week across the city.

- 3.1.3** There are now 25 health focused class sessions held per week comprising Cardiac Rehab (11), Healthwise (11) and Move More (3)
- 3.1.4** Citywide studio provision has increased from 11 in 2015 to 17 in 2018. New centre openings in 2019 /2020 will add an additional 7 studios to the estate.
- 3.1.5** Group exercise classes are recognised as a key tool in attracting and retaining members/customers.
- 3.1.6** Group exercise classes are particularly popular with female users, with females representing 3 in every 4 attendees.
- 3.1.7** Industry wide, group exercise classes are a key tool in increasing female participation. Considerably more females engage in group exercise as their core activity at 38% compared to 14% for males (Active Leisure Trends Report 2018).
- 3.1.8** The current citywide group exercise programme needs to continue to evolve and change to increase usage figures, provide choice for the consumer and ensure quality across all centres.
- 3.1.9** We currently offer 64 virtual classes in Belfast with 34 at Better Gym Belfast and 30 new virtual classes offered in Better Gym Connswater.
- 3.1.10** A summary of additional studio provision planned within Phase 1B of the LTP for Andersonstown, Brook and Robinson centres has been circulated to the Board.

3.2 Performance Update

- 3.2.1** The overall strategic aim remains to get More People More Active More Often through an effective citywide group exercise programme.
- 3.2.2** 203 classes are running citywide with an average of 14 members attending per class in Q2, compared to an average of 12 per class in Q1.
- 3.2.3** The top 3 most popular classes for August-October were:
- Group Cycle- 24% of bookings
 - Total Body Conditioning- 11% of bookings
 - Yoga- 10% of bookings
- 3.2.4** These are the same top 3 classes reported for previous periods and for 2018 to date.

- 3.2.5 Health Focused classes continue to increase moving from 17 in Q1 to 25 classes per week Q2.**
- 3.2.6 There are still a number of classes with a low uptake (under 60% occupancy).**
- 3.3 Changes to Fitness Class Programme**
 - 3.3.1 Improvement of current studio provision – Virtual.**
 - 3.3.2 The new Wexer Virtual class system was installed in Better Gym Connswater (BGC) in September 2018.**
 - 3.3.3 The system was launched on 26 September as part of national fitness day.**
 - 3.3.4 Wexer has allowed for an additional 30 new classes to be added to the existing programme at BGC .**
 - 3.3.5 Wexer also has an on demand function with an average of 25 classes requested per week.**
 - 3.3.6 The product is increasing studio usage throughout the day, not just at scheduled class times.**
 - 3.3.7 Overall Wexer has increased choice by offering 30-50 extra classes and increased participation by 80 users per week equating to 320-350 extra users per month.**
 - 3.3.8 Installed Wexer in BGC (largest H and F membership base) will provide a case study for future developments in virtual classes within the city.**
- 3.4 Programme relaunch at Olympia**
 - 3.4.1 Olympia Leisure Centre’s Fitness Class Programme was reviewed in July and August 2018 with improvements implemented for September 2018.**
 - 3.4.2 The class programme was changed due to underperformance of classes. Alternative classes and times were agreed by the Fitness Manager and fitness team.**
 - 3.4.3 A new programme was launched on 31 August alongside the ‘Charity Spinathon’ in the centre.**
 - 3.4.4 The new programme sought to increase the number of classes on offer, provide more appropriate timings for classes and improve the quality of the programme on offer.**
 - 3.4.5 Since the launch in September, the following has been achieved:**

- 10 additional group exercise classes taken by members of the fitness team added with no additional cost
 - Class usage for September sits at 1,334 bookings per month compared to an average of 1,096 per month in Q1
 - YOY comparison for September demonstrated an increase of 320 attendees alongside an additional £187 P and P income
- 3.4.6 The introduction of new classes such as Boxfit and Omnia circuits served to freshen the current programme and introduce a more functional type of training that previously had not been offered.
- 3.4.7 Further initiatives include development of current junior gym offering alongside introduction of courses i.e. Yoga / Bootcamp.
- 3.5 Challenges identified have refocused attention on underperforming classes across the city. A review of the overall group exercise programme has highlighted:
- A need for alternative classes to be implemented
 - Olympia now can be used as a case study to boost and underperforming class/programme
 - Staff resources - a number of staff have left in the past 3 months including 3 fitness manager and 3 fitness instructors
 - Group exercise training has been organised with two courses due to commence in December 2018 open to all new and existing instructors.”

After discussion, the Board noted the information which had been provided.

Review of GLL Membership Architecture

The Board considered the following report which had been prepared by GLL:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Board on current membership architecture and pricing
- 1.2 To review membership performance
- 1.3 To note that additions to membership architecture are being considered

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Board is requested to consider the update on membership architecture, as presented below.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Background:

3.1.1 The new membership architecture was implemented in Belfast in April 2016 following significant investment across Belfast Centres.

3.1.2 The overall aim of the membership architecture was to:

- **simplify options whilst providing choice;**
- **establish fair market prices for membership packages;**
- **provide value for money;**
- **increase yield in line with other council areas;**
- **ensure that subsidy of concessionary memberships can continue;**
- **ensure that out of city members would not be subsidised by Belfast tax payer, and**
- **Introduce Pay and Play membership pricing.**

3.1.3 Over 60s still have access to centres FOC before 11.00am with an annual registration card priced at £5 per year for Belfast citizens and £10 per year for out of city residents.

3.1.4 An over 60s Pre-paid membership package was introduced giving full access.

3.2 Current Architecture:

3.2.1 The Current Membership options and figures have been circulated to the Board.

3.3 Competitor Analysis

3.3.1 Public Sector Health and Fitness is a challenging market which is showing a decline in growth in past 12 months (State of Industry Report 2018)

3.4 Belfast is also becoming an increasingly competitive market as highlighted in the competitor analysis which has been circulated to the Board.

3.4 Membership Headlines

3.4.1 Overall memberships in Belfast have grown from 11,549 in 2016 to 25,964 members citywide. This includes pay and play memberships which did not exist prior to 2016.

3.4.2 Current Pre-Paid memberships sit at 15,496. This figure includes Belfast Swim School membership which is currently 3462.

3.4.3 Current Pay and Play memberships (introduced in 2016) sit at 9,195.

3.4.4 Average Yield per membership has increased from £18.85 to £21.46- a 12% increase. Average yield is 17% lower than the NI average.

3.4.5 Swim only membership now sits at 676.

3.4.6 Concessionary memberships represent 50% of current Belfast membership.

3.4.6 There are now 153 funded GSF athletes registered on a membership.

3.5 Membership Pricing:

3.5.1 Pre-Paid memberships have been subject to a price increase YOY in line with contractual CPI increase. This has resulted in an annual 2-3% increase, including pre-existing 'ring-fenced' memberships.

3.5.2 To note:

- **Olympia LC offers citywide membership packages only, there is no single centre option.**
- **Over 60 members still have access free of charge before 11.00 a.m. citywide."**

After discussion, the Board noted the contents of the report.

Amendment to Active Belfast Limited Articles of Association

The Partnership Manager reminded the Board that, at its meeting on 11th June, it had agreed not to pursue charitable status and, as a consequence, approved a review of Active Belfast Limited's Articles of Association, to reflect its status as a company limited by guarantee.

He drew the Board's attention to the draft revised Articles of Association which had been formulated by Pinsent Masons, Active Belfast Limited's appointed solicitors, and which reflected the Board's wish that they should clarify Director attendance obligations and resulting actions. If approved, the Articles of Association would be required to be signed by at least 75% of Directors on the Board and be forwarded to Companies House within twenty-eight days of this meeting.

During a lengthy discussion, Directors raised a number of issues arising from the document, primarily around proxy voting, the need to hold an Annual General Meeting, non-attendance at Board meetings and the duration of Directors' term of office.

Accordingly, the Board agreed:

- i. to approve the Articles of Association, as revised and circulated, for submission to Companies House;

- ii. that the Chairperson should forward to each Director a letter informing them that the Board had agreed that any Director who had failed to attend three consecutive meetings and to submit an apology, would be made aware of that fact and be invited to outline their future intentions; and
- iii. that the Partnership Manager submit to a future meeting a report outlining options aimed at addressing the aforementioned issues which had been raised in relation to the Articles of Association.

Schedule of Meetings 2019

The Board approved the following schedule of meetings for the period from January till April, 2019 and agreed that it should continue to meet at 4.30 p.m. on those dates:

- Wednesday, 2nd January;
- Monday, 11th March; and
- Monday, 8th April.

Other Business

Attendances

The Board noted the receipt of a document which set out the attendance details of Directors since June, 2017.

GLL Communications Day

The Board noted that this year's GLL Communications event would be taking place in the Clayton Hotel on Friday, 21st December and that the Partnership Manager would circulate an invitation to all Directors.

Chairperson