

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 October 2023

Present: Councillor Grimston (Chair)  
Councillor Ezeifedi (Vice Chair)  
Councillors Devonish, Hill, Kloss, Nembhard  
and Osborn

Officers: Associate Director of Planning, Infrastructure and  
Economy  
Associate Director of Environment  
Contracts and Partnerships Manager  
Community Commissioning Lead  
Democratic Services Officer (LM)

Also present: Kelly Spencer, SLM  
Paul Saunders, SLM  
Leanne Rodriguez-Reid, SLM

### 34 **Apologies for Absence/Committee Membership**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Ahmed and Khan.

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Rodrigues, had also sent his apologies.

Councillor Nembhard was welcomed as the newest member of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### 35 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

### 36 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 were submitted and signed.

### 37 **SLM Contract Update**

The committee received a presentation from SLM. The slides had been included in the agenda pack.

Introducing the item, the Contracts and Partnerships Manager explained that the item provided details of the performance, outcomes and projects during 2022-23. Everyone Active had a 15-year contract to operate the leisure centres, Woodside Stadium and the Cassiobury paddling pools. The contract would expire in 2035 and supported the Council Plan which was monitored through quarterly meetings. SLM were performing well against the contract and no major concerns or breaches had been identified. Strong relationships were in place and a good understanding of priorities.

Representatives of SLM then delivered their presentation which covered the facilities at the centres, key performance indicators, social value, impact on activity levels, sustainability, engagement with partners, challenges and future plans.

Discussing the update, the committee highlighted the following areas:

- The KPIs referred to attendances rather than numbers of members and the KPI levels were regularly reviewed.
- GP referrals were captured through concessionary membership and there had been 100 referrals in 2022/23 and this was a growing area with a new online system in place. The GPs completed the forms which eradicated the barrier for the digitally excluded.
- The Weight Watchers programme data referred to the first cohort only which was based at Woodside.
- Everyone Active had an apprenticeship programme which had been affected by Covid and was being rolled out now with two apprentices in post. The partnership was being re-established and opportunities communicated to West Herts College.
- SLM offered a variety of activities whereas other gyms did not include classes or studios, this affected pricing levels. Various different packages were available including swim-only but not gym-only. Underrepresented groups were being monitored. Concessionary rates were available for qualifying users.
- Social value was measured through participation, financial performance and surveys. Wellbeing value was difficult to monetise but savings to the NHS could be calculated. Impact of

physical activity could be measured through additional educational qualifications and saving to the judicial system. It had been a helpful tool to measure recovery from Covid; notably swimming at Everyone Active centres had recovered more quickly than other activities.

- Work with schools was ongoing with about 23 schools participating in swimming lessons.
- Active travel to the centres was important to SLM; Beryl Bike vouchers would be given out to customers and a survey was planned around modes of travel. Links had also been made with ArrivaClick to provide transport as part of the warmer places programme.
- There had been an increase in the sheltered housing programme which also combatted social isolation. KPIs were measured through the council's Sports and Physical Activity Manager. Testimonials from residents set out the positive impact on their wellbeing. There was also outreach to the Pensioners' Forum.
- Addressing the impact on children's missed years' swimming lessons due to Covid was an area to be considered further. One-to-one lessons were also available for children with additional needs. SLM would look into whether previous funding sources were still available.
- SLM had considered various options to preserve the climbing wall facility. There had been a decline in usage despite interventions. There had also been competition from another climbing wall centre in Watford.
- To increase capacity in fitness classes, regular monitoring took place and the programmes were amended to accommodate those with waiting lists. Further capacity was also offered through a virtual programme.
- Those who did not attend a booked fitness class were charged and this had proved to be an effective deterrent.
- A regional team reacted to emerging fitness trends and piloting activities at certain sites where appropriate to determine their long-term success.
- Addressing the smaller increase in the throughput of disabled residents, it was noted that this was a group that was particularly affected by the pandemic, but the overall programme had increased.
- There was no single factor that accounted for the increase in BME throughput; it could be an increase in users registering

their ethnicity and there had been a general increase in participation.

- Further clarification was provided about how mental health was measured.

The Chair expressed her thanks to the SLM team and asked about their hopes for the future. There were opportunities to expand certain areas of Central Leisure Centre, including more studios and an expansion of the gym. Car parking capacity at Central Leisure Centre was also a challenge. They would also like to see a return to pre-Covid participation levels. There was a strong working relationship with the council.

RESOLVED –

that the update be noted.

### 38 **Executive/Scrutiny protocol**

The committee received a report of the Senior Democratic Services Officer with the draft Executive/scrutiny protocol for agreement.

The Associate Director of Planning, Infrastructure and Economy presented the report. He noted that agreeing a protocol was an example of best practice and was grounded in the statutory guidance. The intention was not to make any significant changes but to provide a framework for future working. It also captured the dynamics in one place for training purposes.

The committee recorded their thanks to the Senior Democratic Services Officer for her work.

RESOLVED –

that the protocol be agreed.

### 39 **Call-in**

No call-in had been received.

### 40 **Other scrutiny meetings - minutes**

It was noted that the Housing Task Group had held its first meeting and the work programme would evolve over the coming weeks.

**41 Executive Decision Progress Report**

The scrutiny committee was invited to review the current Executive Decision Progress Report for 2023-24 and consider whether any further information was required.

It was noted that since the publication of the agenda, an additional item had been added to the agenda for Cabinet on 30 October; the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

RESOLVED –

that the current 2023/24 Executive Decision Progress report be noted.

**42 Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee**

The Chair, as the council's appointed representative on Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee, provided an update on the most recent meeting.

She expressed some frustration about the focus of the meetings which she did not feel engaged sufficiently with the challenges faced by the health system.

Recent discussions had included using the services at Mount Vernon hospital in a different way and the practical issues with the existing WHTHT sites. She had also raised the issue of failed appointments, where test results were not available.

RESOLVED –

the update be noted.

**43 Work Programme**

Members were invited to review Overview and Scrutiny Committee's draft work programme for 2023/24.

RESOLVED –

That the Chair works with officers to incorporate members' suggestions into the 2023/24 work programme.

44            **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be on Wednesday 15 November.

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.05pm  
and finished at 8.35pm