

# Performance Monitoring Report:

## Community Services and Licensing Committee

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>21 October 2020</b>
<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Mike Hammond, Head of Community Services (MH)</b> <b>Simon Killen, Revenue and Benefit Manager (SK)</b> <b>Councillor Nigel Prenter (NP)</b> <b>Councillor Sue Reed (SR)</b> <b>Angela Gillingham, General Manager, The Pulse (AG)</b> <b>Kevin Ward, Museum Development Manager (KW)</b> <b>Emma Keating-Clarke, Health &amp; Wellbeing Development Coordinator (EKC)</b> <b>Steve Miles (SM)</b>
<b>Apologies</b>	
<b>Attach CDP Action Plans and Risk Report from Excelsis</b>	<p>CDP. 14 – In partnership with Stroud Town Council and Friends of the Lido submit a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund for additional funding to refurbish Stratford Park Lido by 30 April 2020 – On Target.</p> <p>CDP. 17 – Make a decision extending the contract for the provision of leisure services at Stratford Park and consider option for future provision by 31 January 2020 – On Target.</p> <p>CDP. 18 – Agree a long-term investment and management plan for Stratford Park partners and contractors by 31 March 2020. Update: This has not really progressed due to Covid. It was agreed at S&amp;R to give an extra £150m (paid in arrears) to SLM to carry on and there are ongoing talks around the extension with a month to month review.</p>
<b>PROJECTS / CAPITAL PROGRAMME (if not covered in CDP)</b>	<p><b><u>Museum</u></b></p> <p>Further to the previous update, SDC was unsuccessful with an application to a Recovery funding stream. It will now re-look at funding streams provided by Arts Council England, which was the original plan before Covid-19 hit in March and their funding was diverted. Funding is now back and there is a meeting booked to make further progress with this. The need to introduce ticket booking to visit the Museum has provided the Museum team with regular experience in using and managing an online platform for ticketing (a feature SDC 'enabled' on its existing website).</p> <p>The Museum team continue to review and adjust their service delivery as required. For example, they were successful in applying for a grant of £2,648 to deliver remote learning to local schools through a combination of live streaming, including the sharing of in-house recorded video and digital resources for teachers. It is important to provide this service because group visits are not possible and the museum would otherwise have to shut every time a school visit came. In future, these changes can be used to enhance contact before and after visits. This recovery grant was awarded by South West Museum Development with thanks to funding from the Art Fund and Arts Council England.</p> <p><b><u>Community Health &amp; Wellbeing</u></b></p> <p>Community Hub Development – The toolkit will help hubs to identify their areas for development and where/how they can find support to grow. Developing more Community Hubs has been a long-term ambition for SDC and Covid has escalated the process. The process is just beginning and will take many years to come to fruition. SDC hopes to support the project with match funding for a voluntary sector post. Some</p>

	<p>areas do not have anything and others are hoping to move up to the next level of infrastructure and SDC is working hard on inviting people in to work on this. It will be working alongside schools, youth forums and councils to ensure there is engagement with young people. Research is being carried out into what active community groups need to become well established (GL11, for example, is great.) This could include infrastructure, training or funding. All have been written to asking them to consider what they need to become more long-term.</p>
<p><b>STRATEGIC RISKS</b> (see <i>Excelsis</i>)</p>	
<p><b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b> (see <i>Excelsis where applicable</i>)</p>	<p><b><u>The Pulse</u></b></p> <p>All areas are restricted due to Covid, which has had an impact on the programme and delivery. The focus, therefore, has been on activities and money. There is a huge waiting list (e.g. 125 people waiting for Stage 2 lessons) which The Pulse cannot accommodate. The forecast would be good if it were allowed to increase capacity as the demand is there.</p> <p><b>Swimming lessons</b> – In the 2019/2020 financial year, an average of 1505 children attended lessons each week. The Pulse operated at a 91% capacity.</p> <p><b>Swimming lessons</b> – In the 2020/2021 financial year, at an average of 1031 children attend lessons each week – The Pulse is currently operating at a 95% capacity.</p> <p>In order to achieve this figure, it has had to give most of the pool timetable over to swimming lessons.</p> <p>Due to social distancing, the number of children it can accommodate in each lesson is 50% of what it was running pre-COVID.</p> <p>The main time during the programme where there is space in lessons is the 3.30pm start. This is due to schools staggering their start and finish times.</p> <p><b>Private lessons</b> have gone down by 60% - Previously The Pulse could run these lessons during public swimming sessions. Due to COVID restrictions it can only allocate a small amount of pool time for exclusive lessons. There is a waiting list but not enough pool time to accommodate demand.</p> <p><b>Membership</b> – As an average across the 2019/2020 financial year, The Pulse had 1,440 annual and 84 monthly members.</p> <p>In 2020/2021 it has 1011 annual and 60 monthly members. This is yet to be reflected in income as the annual members were credited for the time they missed in March and this figure was only reached in September.</p> <p>Not all members returned immediately as they were given the option to freeze 1, 2, 3 or 6 months membership or cancel without penalty. There are still 201 members on freeze. 476 chose to Freeze in July – 275 have since restarted or cancelled their membership completely.</p> <p>The Pulse is getting enquiries and making new membership sales but due to the constant bombardment of COVID news it is struggling to show any growth in this area at this time. It is also getting daily requests to go back to freeze. This lines up with what is happening on the daily news briefings.</p> <p>Fitness classes – Despite restrictions on numbers, this area is showing signs of recovery. The Pulse has launched a new programme to maximise on the classes which are doing well. It has recently started a new class using a local venue to hold circuit training, enabling the programme to be expanded, and has added an additional Aerobics class (which is high in demand) to the programme.</p> <p>In 2019/2020 42,950 attended fitness classes at the Pulse</p> <p>In 2020/2021 11,162 attended fitness classes at the Pulse – 74% down on previous year.</p>

These figures make for grim reading. However, The Pulse has started to see an increase in demand, which is why an additional local facility is now being used.

The Pulse team are also in discussion with those running Kingshill House (Dursley) and Prema Arts (Uley) to expand its Holistic Programme and offer an alternative programme which is not part of the membership offer, e.g. pilates, yoga and meditation. This programme will be launched in January 2021. Adding to the programme and using satellite sites such as local halls are promising developments.

Its health specific programme is showing signs of recovery with Cardiac and Cancer Rehabilitation and Move it or Lose it (aimed at those 70+) back on the programme. Respiratory Rehab is returning in mid-October. Whilst these are not income generators, they serve to improve the health of the local community.

The Pulse launched its new **app** at the end of September. It makes booking, paying and communicating with the wider public much easier. In the week since launching the app, the fitness programme (including gym use) has seen an increase in participation.

Gym usage is currently 78.5% down on the same period last year.

From October to December, The Pulse is offering free health checks to everyone in order to pull in potential customers to the centre.

### **Revenues and Benefits**

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on collection and is increasing the number of benefits claimants. Council tax arrears have increased by about half a million pounds. SDC has started sending residents a gentle reminder signposting help, advice and support.

All enforcement and Court work is suspended.

<b>Current year collection</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
Council Tax	57.19%	55.65%
Business Rates	57.04%	49.59%

<b>Council Tax arrears</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Amount o/s</b>
September 2019	3,942	1,218,009
September 2020	5,537	1,789,063

<b>Business Rates arrears</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Amount o/s</b>
September 2019	125	273,074
September 2020	218	1,389,751

\*includes backdated assessment of 788,209 for incinerator

### **Museum**

The Museum will not be able to meet targets for visits in person, usage, volunteer hours or income due to Covid-19. It had 1,200 visitors (Jul-Sep) compared with 21,000 the previous year. Whilst not performance measured, it continues to have online engagement through social media, though not at the level during lockdown as resources have been required elsewhere. Zoom meetings and online talks are taking place. The museum staff are looking to increase tours, which will be delivered by volunteers/staff and which will be launched after the half-term events.

### **Youth Service**

	<p>Due to the ramifications of the pandemic on young people's health and wellbeing, much of the Youth Service's work this quarter has been in continuing to support young people as individuals. Advice and guidance have been given to many people. The team have also created ways to keep them in contact with their youth voice group peers. The lifting of initial lockdown restrictions enabled the team to work towards a return to face-to-face engagement. It is following the guidance set out by UK government for the youth sector, as interpreted by the National Youth Agency.</p> <p>The team has been boosted by its new Youth Work Officer, Seb Williams, who is undertaking his induction to the Council, having started at the end of Quarter 1. Youth work being declared an essential service has been helpful.</p> <p>The involvement of Youth voice representatives in various issue-based consultation projects has been complimented by their input into ongoing community projects. The development of a Black Lives Matter statement from SDYC was a highlight. Personal 'lockdown blogs' written by youth voice reps for social media have also featured. Active involvement with the British Youth Council has been maintained, with SDYC reps attending online regional and national events to influence relevant campaigns and policies. There have been issues with buildings used by youth forums, e.g. Stroud Library.</p> <p>The rescheduled SDYC Annual Review (from March) took place outdoors in a marquee at Kingshill House, enabling key projects and issues to be drafted for the remainder of 2020/21. This will be approved alongside the SDYC Manifesto at the forthcoming SDYC Annual General Meeting. SDYC Election of 2020/21 Officers/Leaders has begun.</p> <p>The Youth Work Team's support for local communities and service providers has seen them give information, advice and guidance on a range of matters, some of which are emerging in relation to other SDC services.</p> <p><b><u>Community Health &amp; Wellbeing</u></b></p> <p>H&amp;W7 - Forest Green - CCG funding was extended until March 2021. Following on from the Lawnside Holiday Hunger Project with the The Long Table, the Arkell Centre has now agreed to let the Forest Green project host a 'Freezer of Love' in their kitchen. The Forest Green Project Group will help to distribute healthy, frozen meals from the freezer to residents. These are 'pay as you feel' and payment is all online to de-stigmatise the act of receiving meals from the freezer. 12 of these Freezers of Love are being hosted across the District as a pilot funded by the National Lottery. This will help with food supplies in a Covid second wave.</p> <p>H&amp;W8 – Dementia – Dementia-specific project work has stopped during Covid but SDC are working with the County Dementia Action Alliance. This has allowed Stroud residents to take part in online Dementia Awareness training delivered by Forest of Dean District Council. SDC is working with the Stroud Integrated Locality Partnership on a package of support for Carers and plans to develop Community Hubs will enable further engagement in dementia action across the district. The membership is across Gloucestershire, enabling good practice to be shared.</p>
<p><b>RELEVANT FINANCE ISSUES</b></p>	<p><b><u>The Pulse</u></b></p> <p>Figures for 2020/2021 are compared to the same period in 2019/2020.</p> <p>Income – The Pulse is suffering from an 83% reduction in income.</p> <p>Expenditure – This is down by 12%</p> <p>The current operational deficit is £375,664.</p> <p>In 2019/2020 the operational surplus was (£93,622).</p> <p>The end of year forecast is a deficit of £694,200 so it really is not a good year.</p> <p>During September it ran an offer on personal training – 10 sessions for the price of 8. This was to try and kick start an interest in one2one training. This offer is continuing throughout October. Personal training is down 53% in comparison to last year.</p>

All of the freelance trainers who rented the gym space prior to COVID have cancelled their contracts, which leaves an income deficit of £800 per month in this one area alone. The swimming club have reduced their swimming time due to a reduction in their finances. The Pulse is unable to run inflatable sessions and parties, which are high in demand.

Public swimming is popular, but due to the restriction on numbers The Pulse does not have enough pool time to meet the demand, especially at weekends, due to the additional swimming lessons.

There have been extra costs through enhanced cleaning of approximately £1k per month. However, everyone has embraced the change (both customers and staff).

Swim England have announced they are going to be using The Pulse as a training centre and the first course will be at the end of November. The venue will be paid £400 for each course which takes place and staff are able to put trainees forward.

### **Museum**

Q2 financial forecasts are due by 23<sup>rd</sup> October (after this report). Whilst some income is being generated, this is a lot less than in previous years as footfall is necessarily low in order to maintain Covid-Secure visits. 13% of the museum's income comes from retail activities. The Museum shop re-opened to booked visitors on 12<sup>th</sup> August, but the café (which normally brings in around £50K) remains closed, though ice creams sold well in the summer. There is no space for people to linger and there are no tables to sit at. There is no solution yet as to how the café might be able to operate more often. Retail income in August was 10% of the previous year, and 17% in September. This increase is not due to a rise in income, which has remained steady. It is due to September's income being lower than August's in the previous year. The museum previously reported an overspend of around £50k. This is due to not being able to generate sufficient income through the shop, café and room hire. Meanwhile, many costs have continued.

### **Youth Service**

The rescheduling of youth voice training and development programmes has led to a delay in the spending of related budget.

Zoom only allows over-16s to use it so new consent forms are required to be able to use it. SDYC previously used a different platform limited to 10 users with a different set of conditions.

There have been barriers when trying to recruit but the Youth Service are trying as many different avenues as possible. The support of SDC's Communications Team is extremely important in allowing young people to access SDYC and become representatives.

### **What are the key challenges facing service areas?**

#### **The Pulse**

Due to COVID restrictions, The Pulse is unable to increase capacity within the building.

Since reopening, The Pulse has lost 7 casual lifeguards and teachers. Freelance instructors who they used to hire have not come back and are now working outdoors or in their garages. It is about to lose 3-part time teachers, all of whom have gained work in areas which are in demand during COVID – police call handling, care home and education.

This is relevant as there is a lack of teaching courses, which could have a negative effect on its ability to recruit and train new teachers to fulfil the Learn to Swim programme.

The Pulse has posted an advert on the vacancies page for casual teachers. The next level 1 teachers course is not until February 2021 and is based in Watford. Swim England have stopped their blended learning courses, which is going to cause a shortage in the industry.

School swimming is unlikely to return this financial year. The Pulse has 3 schools which have returned, 2 of which only bring 5 children as they have additional needs. Only one of the large schools is considering returning on a trial basis.

The Pulse team are to be congratulated on the delivery of services under difficult circumstances.

### **Revenues and Benefits**

The Benefits Team have seen a significant increase in workload and have been working tirelessly to ensure it provides valuable help and support to residents most in need. It has been an extremely busy and demanding period working in a different environment but performance has improved and workloads and work queues have reduced.

<b>Council Tax Support</b>	<b>Working age</b>	<b>Pension Age</b>	<b>Amount</b>
September 2019	2,871	2,826	5,786,312
September 2020	3,370	2,810	6,711,956

Universal Credit continues to rise and is a huge drain on resource processing monthly changes:

	<b>New</b>	<b>COC</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>HBSTOP</b>
2020 Q2	130	1466	51	21
2019 Q2	134	955	51	47

As the team moves forward with its digital journey, it will shortly aim to roll out an online change of circumstances and new claim form. This will help enhance the customer experience as well as support automation and processing times.

The Revenues and Benefits team are to be congratulated on their delivery of services under difficult circumstances.

### **Museum**

In adjusting service delivery in response to a Covid-19 world, visitor confidence and trust, alongside the museum staff's integrity, are paramount. The team are looking at how they can deliver some service functions differently (online learning, online public programme events, guided tours) alongside more traditional methods (exhibitions). These will maintain engagement with audiences and provide opportunities longer term. The Supporter Scheme is crucial to the museum's longer-term recovery. It is an attempt to get deep engagement which will shape the future of the museum.

Casual recruitment is proceeding but there is a saving of £13k as it has been decided not to fill two vacant permanent posts and keep this under review. Casual recruitment will provide new blood and the posts may become permanent when things return to normal.

Due to the layout of the building, visitors cannot wander around freely but the team are mindful that some people are not online. Covid has highlighted inequalities and members of the public who do not have access to the internet can call in and book a visit. Primary schools are being engaged with. It was noted that it is harder to connect with secondary schools, which in the past used the museum for looking at tourism or for a debating competition. College students in the past have booked the garden for art projects. However, some students are booking as general visitors at the moment.

The Museum team are to be congratulated on their delivery of services under difficult circumstances.

### **Youth Service**

As reported in Q1, the continuity of young people's active involvement is significant. As such, the support of SDC's communications team, local secondary schools and local youth organisations/services will be important going forward.

During the first 2 quarters, schools have been focusing on changes to the basics due to Covid. A lot of students have been overwhelmed and are only now setting up student councils and sixth form committees. It is taking time for them to get used to the changes so at the moment it is about engaging with young people to say that the Youth Service can help and do things remotely so that they have a voice.

The Youth Service team are to be congratulated on their delivery of services under difficult circumstances.

### **Community Health & Wellbeing**

Young People and Families - Having lost a key member of the team in August, SDC has split the Healthy Lifestyles (Young People and Families) role into a development officer and instructor. SDC is now recruiting for both. The team hope they can fill the roles with quality candidates as it is keen to progress its wellbeing delivery for young people and families. Covid has been particularly hard for young people and their mental health and obesity levels are of concern.

Community Grants Review – Changes to the SDC Community Grants process are needed to ensure parity across the district, more transparent decision making and impactful investment in our VCS. Our VCS needs the grants for the coming year so we need support from across the board to make the changes thoughtfully but swiftly.

The Health and Wellbeing team are to be congratulated on their delivery of services under difficult circumstances.

### **BENCHMARKING eg Peer Reviews; External Audits; LG Inform.gov.uk**

### **The Pulse**

The Pulse is not alone. The Leisure Industry is taking a hit across the country.

### **Museum**

Many museums have remained closed or with restricted opening. Income and visitor figures remain low generally. Ethically speaking, museums are challenging themselves to ensure delivering digital services does not exclude key audience demographics whilst acknowledging that for some this has increased opportunities.

### **Youth Service**

SDC continues to be an example of good practice in demonstrating a well-developed service for young people. The information, advice and guidance given to local stakeholders has been well received. SDYC is highly regarded in the southwest and nationally and it should be a source of pride that in these difficult times youth voice is being further incorporated into the work of SDC.

The October 2020 Performance Monitoring meeting was the first attended by two members of SDYC, a recommendation of the Youth Service Task and Finish Group. It was felt to be beneficial by all, including the representatives themselves, and SDYC's involvement in performance monitoring on all SDC committees will now follow.

### **Community Health & Wellbeing**

	Feedback from our county health and care partners tells us that the Stroud community response to the lockdown was excellent compared with some other districts. SDC should be very pleased that its efforts to support voluntary and community sectors are making an impact.
<b>Progress on any recommendations / actions from the last Committee meeting</b>	