

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

Date of meeting	17 February 2021
Prepared by	Mike Hammond, Head of Community Services (MH) Ange Gillingham, General Manager, The Pulse (AG) Councillor Nigel Prenter (NP) Darren Young, Operations Manager, The Pulse (DY) Kevin Ward, Museum Development Manager (KW) Emma Keating-Clarke, Health & Wellbeing Development Coordinator (EKC) Steve Miles, Senior Youth Officer (SM) Ben Stone, Youth Representative (BS) Lily Haines, Youth Representative (LH)
Apologies	Councillor Sue Reed (SR) Simon Killen, Revenue and Benefit Manager (SK)
Attach CDP Action Plans and Risk Report from Excelsis	<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 – Overdue. Update 19/01/2021: Quarter 3: As stated in Q1 the project is being delayed due to the current pandemic. A meeting has taken place with a representative of the friends of the Lido and another is scheduled in later this week. Again due the pandemic, bids from the various agencies/ organisations have been closed but notification has been received that the scheme is being re-opened. The friends of the Lido will be part of the consultation process for the District leisure review.</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 – Completed. Update 19/01/2021: Quarter 3: The Council has now had confirmation that the extension has been signed and will run until 2024.</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&R to give up to £150,000 (paid in arrears) to SLM to carry on and there are ongoing talks around the extension with a month-to-month review – On Target – Update 19/01/2021: Quarter 3: The consultants and a project lead have been appointed (Max Associates & Angela Gillingham). Angela has been appointed project lead and Mike Hammond as project sponsor. Keith Gerrard has a strategic oversight of the project and its progression. A plan for the project has been laid out and regular meetings are being held. Regular updates are being given to the Chair of CS&L.</p> <p>Public consultation has now closed. A consultation of this size would have expected approximately 600 responses back, however, we received a great total of 1,300. The review is now about to embark on focus group discussions. On 16 February a 3-hour Youth consultation took place. It produced many ideas not previously considered including signposting cycle paths and walkways, using the canal for canoeing and kayaking, developing obstacle courses, loaning bikes and having cycle workshops across the district and using community centres as drop-in centres for reading and socialising.</p> <p>H&W 7 - Initiate and oversee the delivery of a community development project in Forest Green. Update - The Long Table 'Freezer of Love' project is going very well and</p>

	<p>engaged well with local people. The Forest Green group have applied to the Community Resilience & Wellbeing grant to support further development of community hub work in Forest Green.</p> <p>H&W 8 - Support interested towns and villages to become dementia friendly communities.</p>
<p>PROJECTS / CAPITAL PROGRAMME (if not covered in CDP)</p>	<p><u>Museum</u> Updates on previously reported projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Garfield Weston Foundation have made an award of £6,000 to the Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Trust for the new free-to-join supporter scheme. The Museum was also successful in winning a £35,000 grant from Art Council England's National Lottery Project, which they re-launched following suspension to deal with the Covid-19 emergency. This will pay for the bulk of the project, and be supportive towards the Museum's long-term future. The Museum Friends wound-up as part of this project, with outstanding funds transferring to the Cowle Trust (this includes a commitment of just over £13k towards this project). • The remote learning project has been completed (in terms of the funded element). Initially it aimed to work with half a dozen primary schools. Between September and December 360 children across 13 primary schools have taken part in this pilot. Naturally, the legacy of this project will continue to deliver. • Review of museum interpretation is an early lead item for eventual re-display of the mansion. The museum appointed specialists to look at the issues faced over recent years, such as items on open display being broken, interpretation and signage, light pollution issues. It has created an action plan from this work, some short, others longer term. <p>The above has involved £9.5k being raised in grants towards these projects.</p> <p><u>Community Health & Wellbeing</u> <i>Community Resilience & Wellbeing Grant</i> – launched in December with a closing date of 29th January. Decisions will be made in late February. In all, 78 applications for this grant have been received from a breadth of organisations and most qualify. A panel of Officers will be looking at the applications across 2 separate meetings due to the volume of applications received and the process is much more robust than it has been in the past.</p>
<p>STRATEGIC RISKS (see Excelsis)</p>	
<p>PERFORMANCE MEASURES (see Excelsis where applicable)</p>	<p><u>Museum</u> The Museum will not meet targets for visits in person, usage, volunteer hours or income due to Covid-19. It had 1,965 visitors (Jul-Dec) compared with 48,100 the previous year. Whilst not performance measured, it will continue to have online engagement through social media. By way of example, there were over 21,000 'likes' and 453,000 'views' on Facebook and Twitter over the year. It also uses Instagram and YouTube to distribute content. The feedback has been really encouraging, as it has to various e-mail campaigns, with people enjoying and valuing the museum keeping them connected to local heritage.</p> <p><u>Community Health & Wellbeing</u> <u>Healthy Lifestyles Scheme</u></p>

Healthy Lifestyles Classes – Better Balance, Cardiac, Respiratory and Living with & Beyond Cancer - SDC switched to Zoom, then socially distanced in-person activities and then back to Zoom. Stroud was the only authority in Gloucestershire to offer classes online to people with long term conditions. There were 644 cumulative attendances over 16 weeks of the first lockdown and 800 cumulative attendances at socially distanced face-to-face classes from September 2020.

Exercise on Referral - A new online platform is being commissioned to support referrals from Health Professionals.

Health Walks - Recommenced in August 2020, socially distanced. 209 people attended walks in Dursley, Minchinhampton, Nailsworth and Severnside. New website due to be launched in February 2021.

COVID Response - The team continues to support individuals and community groups through the pandemic.

Youth Service

Delivery has continued to ebb and flow with the covid pandemic restrictions. The guidance set out by UK government for the youth sector has led to challenges and constant changes in practice methods. This has unfortunately led to inconsistency around engagement for youth voice representatives.

The team worked hard to deliver face-to-face youth work when restrictions allowed; however, the majority was online. This was given a boost with access to Zoom, enabling more consistent online working opportunities.

SDYC redeveloped its Educational Visits and Journey Policy, its Youth Work Engagement Policy and its Consent and Medical Form for service users – significant work that has clarified and improved operational support. The subsequent roll-out and return of forms is a good example of a task being made much harder due to the pandemic restrictions.

Compared to previous years, youth participation levels (voluntary hours by young people) have unsurprisingly dipped. However, school representatives have been recruited to SDYC, and they began to make a difference towards the latter half of the quarter.

The Pulse

All performance metrics continue to be significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with the centre's capacity in all areas reduced by up to 60% in order to comply with social distancing guidance and legislation.

Q3 2020/21 has been further impacted by a national lockdown in November 2020 and a 1 week 'circuit break' instigated at the Pulse due to a large volume of track and trace instances.

Swimming Lessons

Q3 2019/20 numbers averaged at 1505 which equates to 91% occupancy at the time Q3 2020/21 numbers remained stable at circa 1101 with occupancy at 96%.

Significant pool timetable space has been given to lessons on this period, to allow for reduced headcount per lesson, which has impacted potential income in other aquatic areas.

Waiting lists continue to be a challenge based on capacity with approximately 1500 children waiting for a space within the Learn to Swim programme.

Memberships

Q3 2019/20 membership figures remained fairly static at 1,440 with an additional 84 monthly members. Q3 2020/21 saw a significant reduction to 930 with reduced monthly figures.

Public nervousness and a reduced programme capacity has led to numbers falling despite efforts put in to retention initiatives. Many past members have indicated that they will return to the pulse post-COVID but at present the numbers remain disappointing.

Private lessons

Have seen a sustained reduction of 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.

The attendance figures make for grim reading at a time of national crisis, this is also reflected in the financials below. Much work is ongoing to ensure the Pulse team are in a position to recover as quickly as possible as we see easing of national and local restrictions.

On a slightly lighter note, the team at the Pulse managed to mobilise a virtual fitness programme very quickly when the November lockdown was announced. The team managed to deliver online classes for customers, old and new, all through the lockdown, which received very positive reviews and comment. This work will be replicated and enhanced during any future lockdown (T3+) period.

Revenues and Benefits

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on collection. SDC sends residents a gentle reminder signposting to help, advice and support rather than statutory enforcement notices.

All enforcement and Court work is currently still suspended.

Current year collection	2019/20	2020/21
Council Tax	85.29%	83.18%
Business Rates	83.49%	82.51%

Council Tax arrears	Cases	Amount o/s
December 2019	3,403	977,291
December 2020	5,002	1.614,072

Business Rates arrears	Cases	Amount o/s
December 2019	71	176.767
December 2020	206	604.203

RELEVANT FINANCE ISSUES

Museum

Q3 financial forecasts are predicting an underspend of around £15k. Whilst some income has been generated it is a lot less than previous years as footfall is low to maintain a Covid-secure visit. The museum also had to close in November. The public programme has been hit by restrictions and lockdowns. Conversely, the museum has reduced its forecast income for the next financial year.

Community Health & Wellbeing

	<p>The budget is £29,788 underspent, mostly due to activities not taking place during COVID.</p> <p><u>Youth Service</u> Due to the continuation of restrictions regarding the pandemic, youth voice training and development programmes, along with face-to-face work has led to a significant underspend on the budget – this budget will be needed in 2021/22 to rebuild the relations and the knowledge and skill set of youth voice representatives. There has not been a residential course in two years.</p> <p><u>The Pulse</u> The balance sheet for this period as expenditure remains fairly static but income is vastly reduced. The circumstances of this financial year are widely understood but it is hoped there will be a quick recovery in the leisure market.</p> <p>Q3 2020/21 YTD Expenditure stands at £807,171 Q3 2020/21 YTD Income stands at £239,616</p> <p>A budget deficit for this financial year is forecast at £1.1m.</p>
<p>What are the key challenges facing service areas?</p>	<p><u>Museum</u> The biggest challenge will be recovering the service in line with Government Guidance whilst also meeting the demands of the wider community, though the museum staff have demonstrated great resilience and the ability to embrace change over the last year. The Supporter Scheme is crucial to the Museum’s longer-term recovery.</p> <p><u>Community Health & Wellbeing</u> COVID restrictions continue to hamper some community wellbeing plans, especially for high-risk groups. Where we can offer things online, we are doing so however, where people might be unfamiliar with Zoom technology we are offering additional support.</p> <p><u>Youth Service</u> Restrictions brought about by the pandemic will continue to hamper delivery. Whilst some youth voice representatives are able and comfortable to work online, some do not have easy digital access. This may see some young people drift away from SDYC’s projects and programmes over the coming months. The mental health of youth voice representatives will continue to be a factor well into 2021/22, and it remains a key challenge. As reported in Q1 and Q2; communication remains important, particularly when rebuilding relationships with local secondary schools and local youth organisations/services.</p> <p><u>The Pulse</u> The Pulse continues to be hampered by the global pandemic but is reacting wherever possible to market demands.</p> <p>Apart from the obvious challenges, it continues to see utility costs rise, with both CHP units at the Pulse have now failed and are being managed by Property Services. The hope is that we will see some movement on this issue in the coming months in an effort to reduce expenditure.</p> <p>Work has just been completed to replace the heating pumps which will identify if the heating temperature is causing an issue. The CHP installer requested this before further action is taken. Once this has been monitored a replacement solution will be discussed with the supplier if the units continue to fail. Property Services have confirmed that subject to supplies, the units will be re-commissioned by the end of quarter 1 in 2021.</p>

	<p><u>Revenues and Benefits</u></p> <p>The Benefits Team have seen a significant increase in workload and have been working tirelessly to ensure they provide valuable help and support to residents most in need. It has been an extremely busy and demanding period working in a different environment.</p> <p>The team have provided additional support of £282,897 through the Council Tax Hardship scheme, along with £67,707 in Discretionary Housing payments.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="373 400 1505 508"> <thead> <tr> <th>Council Tax Support</th> <th>Working Age</th> <th>Pension Age</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>December 2019</td> <td>2,910</td> <td>2,918</td> <td>5,780,578</td> </tr> <tr> <td>December 2020</td> <td>3,383</td> <td>2,798</td> <td>6,728,583</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Universal Credit continues to rise and processing monthly changes is a huge drain on resources:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="373 640 1407 748"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>New</th> <th>COC</th> <th>Term</th> <th>HBSTOP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2020 Q3</td> <td>98</td> <td>2,051</td> <td>48</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019 Q3</td> <td>105</td> <td>1,094</td> <td>44</td> <td>22</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>As SDC 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.</p>	Council Tax Support	Working Age	Pension Age	Amount	December 2019	2,910	2,918	5,780,578	December 2020	3,383	2,798	6,728,583		New	COC	Term	HBSTOP	2020 Q3	98	2,051	48	15	2019 Q3	105	1,094	44	22
Council Tax Support	Working Age	Pension Age	Amount																									
December 2019	2,910	2,918	5,780,578																									
December 2020	3,383	2,798	6,728,583																									
	New	COC	Term	HBSTOP																								
2020 Q3	98	2,051	48	15																								
2019 Q3	105	1,094	44	22																								
<p>BENCHMARKING eg Peer Reviews; External Audits; LG Inform.gov.uk</p>	<p><u>Community Health & Wellbeing</u></p> <p>We were the only district offering Healthy Lifestyles classes online throughout the pandemic. Continuing these classes have supported those have to shield at home during the pandemic.</p> <p>The County Council commissioner told SDC that Stroud and the Forest of Dean run the best Know Your Networks in the county.</p> <p><u>Youth Service</u></p> <p>Although hugely compromised by the pandemic restrictions, SDC continues to be an example of good practice in demonstrating a well-developed service for young people. The relationships it has with young people are the bedrock of how it performs. 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.</p>																											
<p>Progress on any recommendations / actions from the last Committee meeting</p>																												