

**LIVE ARGYLL – MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING – UPDATE
REPORT**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Services Committee with an update on the performance and monitoring arrangements between Live Argyll (LA) and the Council as set out in the various agreements between the Council and the Trust.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1.2 Members note and consider the contents of the report.

LIVE ARGYLL – MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING - UPDATE REPORT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Services Committee with an update on the performance and monitoring arrangements between Live Argyll (LA) and the Council as set out in the various agreements between the Council and the Trust.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 3.1 Members note and consider the contents of the report.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The Council approved the implementation of a Leisure and Libraries Trust on 24 November 2016, following a recommendation by the Community Services Committee of 21 November 2016.
- 4.2 Thereafter, LA was constituted on 29 September 2017 and the Council entered into a Transfer Agreement, Service Agreement, Support Services Agreement and Facility Licence. These set out a number of reporting and monitoring requirements.

SERVICES AGREEMENT

- 4.3 There is a Services Agreement in place between LA and the Council in respect of the leisure and library services to be delivered by LA on behalf of the Council. LA are operating in terms of their current business plan from the date of the constitution to the end of Financial Year 2020-21.

BUSINESS PLAN

- 4.4 The Council in constituting LA was mindful of the code of guidance on funding external bodies and following the public pound. In exercising its business plan and delivering the services LA reports that it continues to adhere to those

principles. The overarching business plan based on the financial operating model and services specification was previously agreed by the Council and covers the period from 29 September 2017 -1 April 2021. The Plan refers to 3 main themes set out below each of which LA advises is currently showing a positive trend specifically:

- **Growth:** Pre Covid Pandemic forecast revenues for 2020-21 were anticipated to be positive with a projected increase on previous years revenue estimates, the cessation of services and on-going governmental restrictions have resulted in a significant reduction in income levels, it is anticipated that it may take between 1 and 3 years to return to previous performance levels;
- **Participation:** Pre Covid Pandemic participation figures were strong with substantial individual increases within Leisure services. Library indicators were in line with national trends; and
- **Quality:** LA continue to place a significant amount of emphasis on the quality of product and service on offer and introduced a range of measures and protocols identified and aimed at ensuring a consistent quality offering across all of their services.

BUSINESS PLANNING: SECTOR PLANS

4.5 LA report that despite the significant interruption to front line services, plans are in place to continue with implementing Sector Plan proposals and priorities for change. As with the vast majority of services, plans have been reviewed and where appropriate updated to ensure priorities support the organisation in its re-opening and recovery plan. It is understood that good progress is being made and the plans are on track to deliver or contribute to their proposed outcomes. The following are examples of current work sector plans:

- Re-purposing facilities to support commercial and service activity;
- Replacement Leisure Management system with a focus on customer experience, introduction of an information and booking app;
- Library service review with increased focus on digital provision;
- Leisure Pricing Review stage 2: Outcome increased participation and increase in associated income streams;
- Introduction of a User Accreditation scheme;
- Introduction of a Volunteer scheme;
- Continuation with Helensburgh Innovation Hub; and
- Continuation with Helensburgh Victoria Halls Storage Project.

THE SERVICES / PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

SERVICE SPECIFICATION

4.6 LA is responsible for delivering Leisure, Library, Halls, Community Centres, Museum, Archive and Active Schools services across Argyll and Bute. The

Service Specification sets out the specific services LA have committed to deliver and that they are required to ensure they adhere to those commitments.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 4.7 In order to establish if and to what extent they have complied in the provision of the services, the Services Agreement requires LA to provide operational performance information to the Council with a Performance Report on its operational performance in the second and fourth quarter of each financial year (namely June and December). The Trust are also required to provide a complete set of relevant accounts to the Council no later than 5 months from the end of each financial year.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 4.8 It is not appropriate to report on growth, participation and quality measures for the latest period given the governmental closedown of Leisure and Library services. The annual report for the period end March 20, immediately preceding closedown clearly demonstrates positive trends across the significant majority of indicators.

LiveArgyll report that analysis of performance data available for those services which were allowed to resume show a reasonable uptake to date and figures are in line with national and local customer survey expectations. It should be noted that it is envisaged that in some cases it may take between 1 and 3 years to return to pre-covid levels.

FINANCIAL POSITION

- 4.9 LA, continue to actively manage their financial position. LA have successfully accessed the UK Government Employee Retention Scheme alongside accessing some sector specific support funds. This has allowed the company to offset a 7 month loss of self-generated income and an on-going reduction in activity as a result of restrictions. A phased approach to re-opening is in place which takes cognisance of on-going government restrictions, customer demand and available governmental support. This approach is proving successful and is highlighted in the fact that LA have not requested any additional funds, a position which is significantly different across Scottish Local Authorities where there is a £120 million in year shortfall being reported with Council being asked to fund individual shortfalls. The financial position will continue to be reviewed by Commercial Services and Financial Services to confirm the final outcome.

2021 - 2024: Positive discussions have taken place in respect of future funding requirements for the 3 year period to 2024. LA are intending to fulfil their over-arching objective of being less reliant on management fee funding at the same time as retaining a quality service offering.

SCHEDULED DEVIATIONS

- 4.10 Against a background of national imposed restrictions it is considered that LA have fulfilled their service delivery obligations. It should be noted that LA were one of very few trusts which as a result of robust planning and collaboration with Council partners, re-opened their full Leisure service provision on the first allowable date.

SUPPORT SERVICES AGREEMENT

- 4.11 There is a Support Services Agreement in place between LA and the Council in respect of central support services delivered by the Council to the Trust. As part of the requirements of the agreement, the operation of the support services are kept under annual review by the Council and LA. LA has advised that from their perspective, arrangements continue to operate satisfactorily with effective working partnerships in place.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.12 In addition to the monitoring and reporting requirements above LA report that there are a number of other developments coming forward in 2021 across all service areas including but not limited to:
- Working with Health and Social care partners to develop social prescribing opportunities across Argyll;
 - Continue to work with Citizens advice and other partners in respect of utilising library venues;
 - Introduction of a virtual fitness class offering; and
 - Further expansion of their highly successful borrow-box service (digital book lending).
- 4.13 LA report that they will also continue to focus on their maximising charitable status strategy. This work stream will look at a number of areas including donations, legacy funding, grants and sponsorship as well as inclusion, accessibility, literacy, social interaction and mental health initiatives.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The current arrangements between the Council and LA are working well with no areas of service which are of particular concern. The specific reporting and monitoring requirements are deemed fit for purpose. Given the extra-ordinary operating circumstances of 2020, LA has adapted well and robust recovery plans are in place.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy - In line with Council policy in relation to Leisure and Libraries Trust
6.2 Financial – None

- 6.3 Legal - In line with relevant contractual agreements between Council and Live Argyll
- 6.4 HR - None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty:
- 6.5.3 Islands – None
- 6.6 Risk – as outlined in body or report above
- 6.7 Customer Service - None

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