



BUSINESS PLAN

2020/2021

The main graphic features the "ACTIVE" logo in large, stylized letters with a purple and orange color scheme, and "Leisure Sport Wellbeing" written below it. The background is a collage of people exercising in a gym. A purple diagonal shape is on the right side.

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THE BUSINESS

Active4Today Ltd was launched on 1st June 2015 and is an independent company registered with Companies House, with Newark and Sherwood District Council being the single shareholder.

The business consists of three leisure centres, a sports development section and a headquarters, which collects and manages the finance of the business, including the in-house direct debits. In addition to these services, Active4Today Ltd provides administrative and management support to the Southwell Leisure Centre Trust and operates additional dryside provision out of Newark Academy and Bishop Alexander LEAD Academy, Barnby Road Academy, through service level agreements.

The Company is estimating a usage to the end of 2019/2020 of 1.25m visits, over its whole business including Southwell Leisure Centre. In addition, it has a direct debit membership base on 31st October 2019, of 12,718; this includes Southwell Leisure Centre (these figures include both adult and junior members).

The aim of the business is to focus on 3 distinct areas:

- Healthy and active lifestyles
- Accessible facilities
- Financial viability

The Company's unique selling point (USP) is that of a fully accessible service, which is family friendly and offers a wide range of activities to attract users from all age groups and all socio-economic backgrounds. The work of the Company, although complimentary, is split into three areas. These are:

- Leisure facilities
- Outreach work
- Club development

Leisure Facilities

Within these facilities, the leisure centres provide activities to various groups covering, children, adults, 60 plus, affiliated clubs and schools. These are subsequently split into three categories of pay and play, block bookings and direct debit memberships.

The leisure facilities are provided in Blidworth and Ollerton and also in Newark, with a partnership arrangement with the Southwell Leisure Centre Trust and their facility in Southwell. In addition, partnerships were formed with Newark Academy, Barnby Road Academy and Bishop

Alexander LEAD Academy Trust, in a bid to expand the offer of the Company and improve health and fitness, for the communities of Newark and Sherwood.

The offer is very different at each site, ranging from a wet and dry facility in Newark and dry only facilities at Blidworth and Ollerton. Currently there is no Active4Today operated wetside provision within the Sherwood part of the district, however, working in partnership with the Council, construction of a new swimming pool is planned to commence during 2020. In addition wet and dryside facilities are provided in partnership with the Southwell Leisure Centre Trust. Finally, additional dryside facilities are provided within Newark, in partnership with Newark Academy, Barnby Road Academy and Bishop Alexander LEAD Academy Trust.

Outreach Work

Predominantly, this area of work is provided through the sports development section, either through direct provision, or through partnership working with other providers, these include Everyone Health, Nottinghamshire YMCA, clubs and sporting organisations.

During 2019, the sports development team has supported several clubs and schools and are involved in planning for the future, particularly around demonstrating the demand for facility developments and the review of policy documents i.e. Physical Activity and Sport Plan, Playing Pitch Strategy and linking to the research and insight, available from a variety of sources, including Sport England's Active People Survey and local health data.

Club and Volunteer Development

The local sports forums are supported by the sports development team on a quarterly basis throughout the year, providing much needed secretariat, advice and support to volunteers and clubs through these meetings. There has been an increase in the number of clubs actively engaged in these groups with additional training and workshops co-ordinated to both maintain and improve the quality of community sports provision.

The work experience and VISPA volunteering schemes is a crucial tool to recruit new volunteers into sports activities both in clubs and leisure centres. This is particularly focussed on the 14+ age group, encouraging young people to get involved in volunteering in their community and gaining valuable experience and qualifications to potentially secure a job in the sports and leisure industry. Further developments to this are taking place within the new year and are set out in the aims and actions section below.

The sports development team works closely with national governing bodies and Active Notts to co-ordinate an annual programme of courses and workshops according to the needs of the volunteers and coaches. This has developed further during 2019/2020 and co-ordinated by working in partnership with a number of local authority areas in Nottinghamshire. Courses run

throughout the year have included FA level 1 coaching courses, safeguarding and protecting children and first aid.

AIMS AND ACTIONS

As part of the business plan, Aims and Actions have been identified, which focus on key parts of the business. In addition to the financial aims of the Company, which is to maintain a service to the customer at a 'zero' management fee to the Council; the Company is committed to increasing participation in sections of the community, who may not traditionally engage in physical activity.

Finally, the Company is committed to the provision of high quality services that provide value for money to the customer. This will be achieved through continuous improvement to the facilities.

The suggested Aims and Actions for the 2020/2021 are set out below and are linked to the Council's Community Plan and Physical Activity and Sport Plan, which was approved by the Leisure and Environment Committee during 2018.

The proposed aims and actions set out below are currently in draft form and further discussion regarding these will take place, during the joint meeting between A4T Board members and L&E members, during December 2019.

| | AIMS | ACTION |
|-----------|--|---|
| 1. | Healthy and active lifestyles | |
| 1.1 | Childhood obesity - develop and provide opportunities for 'young people in primary education' to increase levels of physical activity and sport. | a) Co-ordinate a series of free coaching sessions to school groups, when accessing school swimming at sites. b) Create 4 school to club links to develop junior membership in local sports clubs |
| 1.2 | Inactive people - develop and provide opportunities for 'inactive people' to increase levels of physical activity and sport. | a) Development of water based and swimming activities for all ages at Dukeries Leisure Centre b) Introduce a series of taster activities, with specialist instructors at sites |
| 1.3 | NSEC 6-8 - develop and provide opportunities for people living in high NSEC 6-8 target areas to increase levels of physical activity and sport. | a) Develop a series of free membership activities, based on a criteria of children receiving free school meals b) Introduce 7 day adult passes through a partnership with DWP |
| 1.4 | Development of the VISPA Academy to provide opportunities for young people to obtain coaching qualifications, while gaining valuable experience through volunteering. This will ultimately provide a pathway for employment. | a) Offer 12 bursaries for both DLC and NSFC for individuals to complete coaching qualifications in gymnastics, trampoline and swimming |
| 2. | Accessible facilities | |
| 2.1 | Ensure the programme of community use of the Dukeries Leisure Centre, specifically focused on the development of the new swimming pool during 2020 is fully inclusive | a) Provision of 'Pool pod' and traditional hoist in the pool area b) Provision of staff training to broaden the opportunities available |
| 2.2 | Improve community access through partner facilities and put in place SLAs with each partner site. | a) Increase the number of partner sites to 5. |
| 2.3 | Improve the range of technology utilised to | a) Develop and introduce an 'app' which has a range of self service |

| | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| | enhance the customer experience | functions for accessing bookings and account management, customer engagement and fitness tracking b) Develop the 'concierge' model to improve customer interaction within front of house teams c) Introduce a range of 'cashless' entry options for customers Develop a 'cashless' offer for the leisure centres, which could remove the need to pay cash at any facility during 2020/2021 |
| 3. | Financial viability | |
| 3.1 | Development of the Dukeries swimming pool and existing facilities | a) Develop a pre-sales campaign for the launch of the new swimming pool, which will increase membership b) Develop the 'concierge' model to improve customer interaction within front of house teams |
| 3.2 | Develop a scoping document, with support from ICT, which will review the current front of house and back office management software, to assess if this is fit for purpose, or requires a new system | |
| 3.3 | Increase junior memberships at the Dukeries LC with the development of the new swimming pool | |

Fig 1: proposed outcomes/objectives and actions for 2020/2021

CUSTOMERS

The business is made up of customers who are at the heart of the business. Physical access to the services by them, occurs in various ways including:

- Free of charge
- Pay and play
- Direct debit
- Club block bookings, both through invoice and direct debit

SERVICES AND COMPETITORS

The services are split into two areas which are indoor provision; provided by the leisure facilities and external provision; provided by the sports development section of the business. Within the leisure centres, the services are divided up into distinct areas, wetside provision and dryside provision. These are once more sub divided into fitness suites, sports hall hire, squash courts, club bookings and swimming.

In addition to the provision of leisure facilities, the Company also sells related saleable goods; these items are referred to as secondary spend. Prices for both primary and secondary items are determined through either a percentage increase based on the cost of purchase or through an assessment of the competition, affordability and the socio economics of the district and the residents who use the facilities.

Members will be aware that in January 2019, the L&E Committee approved the introduction of a 3-year pricing strategy for the Company, which was launched on 1st April 2019 and which

determined the membership pricing points, annual increases and realignment of existing members to the same levels. Other prices change throughout the year, as promotions and targeted marketing campaigns.

In addition to the 3-year pricing strategy set out above, core prices are also proposed by the Company for ‘pay and play’ booked sessions. These are set out below with current and proposed prices shown.

| Activity | Active Card holder Adult | | Non Active Card Holder Adult | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| | Current Price | Proposed Price | Current Price | Proposed Price |
| | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 |
| Badminton | £9.00 | £9.50 | £11.00 | 12.00 |
| Swimming | £4.50 | £4.75 | £5.50 | £6.00 |
| Squash | £7.50 | £8.00 | £9.00 | £10.00 |
| Fitness Suite | £6.50 | £7.00 | N/A | |
| Fitness Suite Classes | £6.50 | £7.00 | N/A | |
| | | | | |
| Activity | Active Card Holder Junior | | Non Active Card Holder Junior | |
| | Current Price | Proposed Price | Current Price | Proposed Price |
| | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 |
| Badminton | £5.00 | £5.50 | £6.00 | £7.00 |
| Swimming | £3.00 | £3.25 | £3.50 | £4.00 |
| Squash | £4.00 | £5.00 | £5.00 | £6.00 |
| Fitness Suite | £3.00 | £4.00 | N/A | |
| Fitness Suite Classes | £3.00 | £4.00 | N/A | |

Fig3: Proposed Core Prices for Adults and Children – 2020/2021

The Company is proposing minor increases in pay and play prices for adults and children and these are set out above. The main focus for the pricing is to encourage pay and play users to become direct debit members. This allows the Company to gain data from these users, which will ultimately influence the programmes and classes within the facilities. In addition, it assists the Company to understand the usage patterns of pay and play users and where possible ensure they are receiving the best value for money option available to them, which is applicable to their usage.

MARKETING

To assist with the sustainability and growth of the business, the Company currently markets and advertises extensively to attract and retain its customers and build the profile of the Company locally. Improvements in retention are provided through targeted communications throughout the building and direct marketing; reminding customers of their original goals and why they joined the facilities. This is undertaken through the ‘TRP’ software package.

The Company’s website and digital marketing platforms have been used to promote and market the full range of services and during 2019/2020; this will improve accessibility as well as enabling the customer to view and book activities on-line. The website currently attracts an average of 55,000 hits per month. There are also approximately 4,000 bookings made on our online

booking system every month for classes, allowing customers to access our services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, without having to call the centre. The Company has a Communications Officer in post and this person is tasked with promoting and leading on the digital marketing strategy and supporting the traditional advertising including newspapers, press releases and editorials.

The sports development team also work closely with Radio Newark and in particular on the Newark and Sherwood Sports Awards. This assists to help raise the profile of the local sports clubs, volunteers and individuals as well as the Company.

STAFFING

To undertake the work, the Company has a team of dedicated individuals, led by a committed and passionate management team. The team has several years of practical experience within the leisure industry and this is supported by a sound academic base to ensure the practical knowledge is underpinned by professional qualifications. In the region of £20,000 is invested annually into training, continuing professional development (CPD) and maintaining staff qualifications. This is identified through the annual performance review, which all staff members are encouraged to engage with.

In addition to the training budget identified above, the Company is required to pay the Apprenticeship Levy and currently employs several apprentices. This enables the Company to 'ring fence' resources to recruit employees onto apprenticeships, providing valuable vocational training whilst achieving a recognised qualification from an accredited training provider.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Company is committed to ensure the performance of a variety of areas is achieved, aligning our resources, systems and employees to the strategic objectives identified earlier. Outcome based performance monitoring is now widely used along with narrative based performance evidence. The performance indicators are linked to the Council's strategic outcomes and have been developed with Members of the Leisure and Environment Committee, in order to build a performance framework. Following the review of the Council's Sport and Physical Activity Plan, performance indicators have also been developed to ensure there is a clear synergy between the operations of A4T and the aspirations of the Council.

FINANCE

As part of the business planning process, the Company undertakes extensive and detailed work in producing accurate budgets. As set out during previous reports, the Company is making provision to develop reserves of £750K. This level of reserve will ensure resilience for the organisation, which supports the Company and Council to ensure Active4Today remains in a

financially sustainable position. As members will be aware, the Company currently operates on a management fee paid by Newark and Sherwood District Council.

As a result of the recent proposals by the district council, the management fee going forward from 2020/2021 will be determined in two ways:

The payment applicable to the Southwell Leisure Centre Trust will be paid in full at the beginning of the financial year, minus any contribution which SLCT make direct to A4T and which has been agreed between NSDC and SLCT, within the previous financial year.

Any additional management fee required by A4T to maintain the operation of the Company will be agreed at the end of the year and paid before the final accounts are completed.