

Project code: 8383

Project name: London Borough of Hounslow – Leisure Transfer and Mobilisation Team – 15 Team members, and 360 individuals in the wider team.

Contact: Amy Burns, Hounslow Council

Category: Team of the Year

Category type: LGC Awards Categories

Project title: London Borough of Hounslow – Leisure Transfer and Mobilisation Team – 15 Team members, and 360 individuals in the wider team.

- These awards primarily cover achievement and performance in the calendar year 2020 and the first two months of 2021, and entries should have a particular focus on that period. However, judges will take into account work that began before that period, as well as achievement and performance since that period.
- The awards will reflect the fact that Covid-19 and the response to it have posed an unprecedented challenge to local government. Judges' decisions should reflect attributes such as performance, resilience, compassion and adaptability in the face of the pandemic alongside achievement, innovation and vision. However, entries which are primarily not about the council's pandemic response should be treated equally to those that are.
- You only have to submit a single statement explaining why you should win (up to 1,000 words).
- Please also provide a 100-word summary of your entry. Please use this as an opportunity to make a pitch to our judges about what makes your work innovative and bold.
- Please use the questions in the bullet points below as a guide and break up your submission accordingly. Some may be more applicable than others for your entry.
- Please specify which private sector partners do you work with (if any).
- While you have the option of providing supporting material, we urge you to do this sparingly, and only if you feel further evidence is required to back-up your entry. The critical information should however be included in the main part of your entry.

If you require any help with your entries contact: **Rafael Younes** on **020 3953 2115**, email Rafael.Younes@emap.com or **Jae Taylor** on **020 3953 2117**, email Jae.Taylor@emap.com

Supporting material:

[team_of_the_year_supporting_evidence.pptx](#)

Please use the questions in the bullet points below as a guide and break up your submission accordingly. Some may be more applicable than others for your entry.

Total word count: 1,000

Submissions should focus on:

- A brief description of the role of your team;
- How the objectives of your team are set, how you measure the extent to which you have achieved those objectives and what you do with the results of that measurement;
- Who the customers of your team are and how you ensure that you are responsive to their needs;
- Your team's current objectives and achievements with a particular focus on the relevant timescale.
- How the team contributes to the council's wider objectives;
- How you develop effective team working.

Award entries will be judged on:

- The team's performance within the relevant timescale and in particular evidence showing the extent

- to which it achieved its objectives and contributed to the council's wider objectives;
- The team's responsiveness to changing customer needs, evidence on its performance and the council's strategic objectives;
 - Its demonstrable commitment to developing effective team working.

brief description of the role of your team:

Brief description of the team

This cross-council agile team led and delivered a transfer of Leisure Services from an external provider to a newly formed Council wholly owned company. In the process, rescuing these services from prolonged impact, resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

The team (ICT, Leisure, Property, Facilities Management, Customer Services and Communications) were urgently convened to lead this work. They worked together with a reminder about the Council's values and specifically "Harnessing the mix and Do New" which set the guiding principles of the approach. It enabled the individuals in the team to act with freedom, to find solutions, make rapid decisions and ultimately make a difference.

Specialist leisure and project management support to the team was provided in the form of a PMO, alongside specialist legal and other expert advice. Transitional sales and marketing support was also key.

Objectives and challenges

The team was tasked with delivering a mutually agreed early termination of contract with an external provider, with reversion of the leisure facilities to management under Council control via a newly established leisure wholly owned company called Lampton Leisure.

The full transfer involved six leisure facilities (to the LATC) and four public halls and a day centre (to direct management by the Council) which needed to be brought back into use. This was important as we wanted our customers to benefit from the reopening of facilities as pandemic restrictions lifted. The leisure industry was hugely affected financially and operationally due to full closure of leisure facilities, and the ongoing exclusion of customers from accessing leisure services.

The Council's Cabinet agreed the transfer on 8 September 2020, which set the objectives of the transfer. This was supported by an options appraisal and business case. Once the decision was taken to transfer the leisure services to our wholly owned company, Lampton Leisure, the transfer was to be achieved within eight weeks. This was despite the additional complexities of the COVID-19 re-opening arrangements. The transfer was achieved on 1 November 2020.

It was recognised this process would normally take 9-12 months to complete however the timescale for transfer was 4.5 months. A phased opening was required due to COVID-19.

As part of this decision, the Council felt that the service needed to be re-aligned to its long-term wellbeing objectives, as set out in our Corporate Plan 2019-2024. Following an options appraisal, transfer into the Council's wholly owned company, was deemed the best long-term solution to achieve these and other strategic objectives.

Our customers

Through the Council's Leisure provision over 10,000 members of Leisure Services were directly

affected by this transfer. The ongoing closure was a further barrier to our residents and others being able to access services to benefit their health and wellbeing.

New commissioning documents and key performance indicators were produced to redefine and align the operation by Lampton Leisure. This helped the Council to deliver its ambitions as set out in its Corporate Plan; particularly in improving the health and wellbeing of communities and working in partnership with Public Health and NHS.

Achievements

The objectives to deliver a seamless transfer of the leisure facilities and services from the existing contractor (Fusion Lifestyle) to a new subsidiary under the Council's wholly owned trading company Lampton Leisure and reopen for our customers. This was achieved within 4.5 months and the public halls were transferred directly to the Council at the same time.

Lampton Leisure was established and all aspects of creating an effective leisure operation were developed and delivered. Three hundred and fifty staff transferred via TUPE from the current provider, moving onto the London Living Wage in the process. In addition, a new management team was created for the company, along with all the associated governances, contracts and processes. A full induction programme was designed and delivered to ensure these individuals were welcomed into Lampton Leisure with its associated not-for-profit social ethos.

Over 50% of membership had been lost as a result of ongoing closure. However, we remained in contact with members and other stakeholders, to ensure they were communicated with throughout which resulted in a bounce back of members. Our leisure numbers in May, following opening in April 2021, is 9,500 members, with positive numbers for casual usage at 4079 (a 122% increase from April 21), 3,600 members enrolled in Swim School, 108% increase in social media and 2,236 class bookings.

The transfers were achieved on schedule, and the facilities and services ready for business for the re-opening. The challenge now is to sustain real improvements in the health and wellbeing of the Hounslow communities in general, as well as those who are suffering most from health inequalities. Through this new approach, a new ambitious Leisure strategy is being created and the portfolio of service provision being increased. This will include sports and other field facilities across the borough, which have been enabled by these successful changes.

Developing effective team working

An agile project approach was developed with individuals from across the Council and through Lampton Leisure board to steer and deliver the changes. TUPE staff, and newly recruited staff, were brought together in a series of workshops and sessions to help develop the company offer, new culture and clear procedures and objectives. Daily scrums were undertaken by the team to ensure progress, performance monitoring and objective achievement. Most of the work was undertaken remotely due to the pandemic restrictions. The early transfer of a manager from the existing operator helped with the logistical issues generated by the transfer.

Governance structures and clear strategic objectives were critical. They were put in place from the start of the project, with ownership and oversight by the Executive Director. It was important to bring the right team together, across a range of functions, to ensure a smooth delivery and the team continued to move from strength to strength.

Leisure expertise was essential throughout the project. This aided the loss of knowledge while the transfer was taking place and supported the new entity set up. Other colleagues from the Council with expertise were recruited to the team. They focused on sales and marketing, the website and the use of multi-channel media.

The emerging management team from the LATC / Council were immersed in delivery of the transfer, which enabled the delivery of the new model for Hounslow leisure services.

All of the above contributed to the success of the transfer, alongside the successful leadership and teamworking at all levels, that enabled a quick and effective delivery of all objectives.

100 word summary*

100 word summary:

The team was established to deliver the negotiation and transfer of Leisure Services from an external provider to a wholly Council owned entity. This transfer and mobilisation were achieved in a record 4.5-month timeframe at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated negative impacts it was having on the leisure industry and Council leisure services.

This team formed the basis of the new management arrangements for the Council's commissioning team and company management service. The organisation is now going from strength to strength delivering more ambitious services to meet the needs of our residents and customers.

*** If you are a private sector organisation Please provide contact details of the local authority that you are in partnership with. You will need to obtain prior consent from the local authority contact to pass on their details for GDPR compliance.**

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