# Design Principles
# Stakeholder Engagement

**May 2025**

# Contents

Introduction ..... 3
Background ..... 4
The Approach ..... 4
Workshop Outcomes ..... 5
SWOT Analysis ..... 5
Proposed Priority Actions ..... 8
A Vision Statement for One Leisure ..... 9
Tools & Actions to Succeed ..... 9
One Leisure Design Principles ..... 10
Values ..... 11
Customer Charter ..... 12
Other Issues/Actions ..... 13
Appendices ..... 14
Appendix 1 - Consultees ..... 14
Appendix 2 –Staff Engagement Workshops - Slide Deck ..... 16

# Introduction

This report provides a summary of the outputs from stakeholder engagement sessions to establish a framework that will support the on-going service transformation of One Leisure.

These engagement sessions are part of the on-going process of meaningful consultation with staff throughout the One Leisure transformation journey that follows engagement undertaken throughout the service restructure and the corporate *Let's Check In* Staff Temperature Check Survey undertaken in summer 2024.

First Point Management & Consultancy have been a partner in helping to shape and define the service transformation and have been commissioned to lead the stakeholder engagement on this next phase of the transformation journey.

This has been a 'bottom-up' process that offers a range of opportunities and options to develop, shape, finalise and improve the service in the short, medium and the longer term. Developing a collaborate approach to service improvement opportunities will help place the service to be in a strong position in future years as the implementation and impact of Local Government Reform approaches.

Engagement sessions were held with a cross section of One Leisure operational staff, feeding into the Senior Management Team of One Leisure and representatives of Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) Senior Leadership Team and lead Members.

The outcomes from the engagement sessions are presented in this report.

# Background

The Independent Review of the Long-Term Operating Model for One Leisure was undertaken in summer/autumn 2023 and subsequently adopted by the Council in April 2024. One of the recommendations from this review was to:

> *Establish a set of Transformation Design Principles and an Outcomes Framework for the service.*

The Outcomes Framework will be formed from Design Principles, the Vision for the service and subsequently developed to form part of the target setting and performance management within future Performance Development Reviews that are proposed to be introduced corporately.

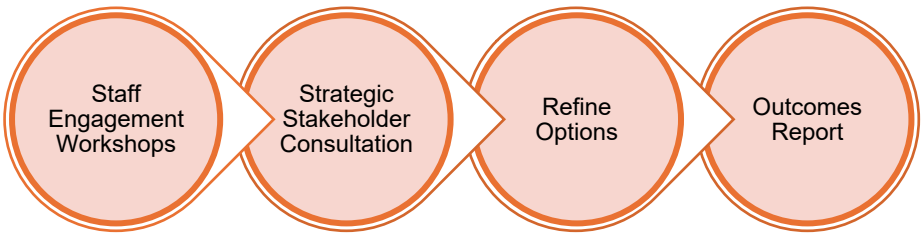
# The Approach

Two staff workshops were undertaken at St Ives Outdoor and St Neots on 25th and 26th March 2025, with a cross section of c. 20 staff from across One Leisure attending, providing a good representation across job roles. This was followed up with a feedback session with staff on 4th December 2025 to reflect upon and refine the workshop outcomes where deemed appropriate.

It should be noted that as a front-line service it is always going to be difficult to facilitate 'in person' sessions particularly in a service like leisure that operates a near 24-7 service.

The staff workshops included undertaking a SWOT analysis, exploring service improvement opportunities, drafting a Vison Statement, supported by a set of Design Principles for One Leisure, a discussion about the corporate values and how they are applied within the service and drafting a Customer Charter.

Following the workshops the outcomes were discussed with the senior team of One Leisure, senior officers of HDC, portfolio holder and lead Members to refine the workshop outputs and determine the Vision Statement, Design Principles, Customer Charter and any other future actions.



# Workshop Outcomes

Two workshops took place on 25th and 26th March 2025 at St Ives Indoor and St Neots respectively. In total nineteen staff members from a range of job roles across all One Leisure sites attended the workshops. A full list of consultees is included as Appendix 1

## SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis is a tried and tested tool used to draw out key issues and opportunities to help inform future actions. Key issues from the two workshops are presented below.

| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** |
|---|---|
| • Job Security – Regular Hours<br>• Facilities – variety of the product offer<br>• St Ives Outdoor – 'regional facilities'<br>• Geographic Locational Spread of sites<br>• Scale – Burgess Hall<br>• Family Offer<br>• Value for Money<br>• Customer Loyalty<br>• Staff<br>• Teamwork | • Resources – enough time to do the job<br>• Facility Investment Requirements<br>• Service Contracts – need more options/capacity<br>• Lack of Maintenance staff<br>• Internal Comms – no structure<br>• Lack of Senior Management Feeback/Comms/Engagement<br>• Not Listening to 'shop floor'<br>• Effective Planning for introduction of new products – failure to engage with staff at the outset<br>• Lack of Consistency in process/delivery between sites<br>• Loss of Skills/Knowledge<br>• No Marketing Strategy<br>• Insufficient Marketing Resource<br>• Understanding the Customer Journey<br>• Customer Engagement – no *'You Said We Did'* |
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| • Capital Bids<br>• How to expand Ramsey<br>• More Events in Burgess Hall<br>• Staff Training – Learning & Development Plan<br>• Improve Marketing<br>• Maximise Social Media – promo clips – create 'Tribes'<br>• Reach New Customers<br>• Customer Growth<br>• Embrace AI – to assist the service<br>• Increase Awareness of the positive impacts internally/externally | • Job Security – Restructures<br>• Competition – gyms<br>• Financial Pressures<br>• Condition & Maintenance of Facilities |

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|---|
| • Staff<br>• Teamwork<br>• Staff Progression Opportunities (post restructure)<br>• Resourceful (with limited resource)<br>• Facilities – variety of the product offer<br>• Location – close to schools and future customers<br>• Community Connections/Active Lifestyles - Clubs<br>• Value for Money<br>• Customer/Staff Loyalty<br>• Call Centre | • No PDR/Appraisal (HDC wide)<br>• Effective Comms structure, 1-2-1s, reward system etc<br>• No regular GM meetings<br>• Ageing Stock – need Capital Investment to maintain existing sites properly<br>• Design/configuration of sites – customer flows etc<br>• Responsiveness of Service Contracts<br>• Site capacity – to meet needs of growing population<br>• Leisure Trends – slow to react<br>• No Digital Programme Offer<br>• Social Media presence – variable<br>• Effective Planning for introduction of new products – need to co-design<br>• Marketing Strategy – not data driven, lack of research.<br>• App scope for improvement<br>• No plans to use AI<br>• Sales System<br>• Customer Retention<br>• 'Cheap' systems – to check H&S, equipment – (need to upgrade package) |
| **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| • Capital Investment<br>• Population Growth (facilities need grow to keep up with demand)<br>• Harness the passion within One Leisure.<br>• Communicate with Upskilling of Staff – L&D Programme<br>• Have space to run courses for staff or sell to others<br>• Local Connections – use Town Councils & other community partnerships<br>• Improve Internal Comms Structure<br>• Develop a Marketing Strategy<br>• Design a 'Competition Defence Strategy' – NOW – facility investment/marketing | • Managing 11–19-year-olds in the gym –(need additional resource at peak times to resolve)<br>• Competition – gyms – plans for a new David Lloyd<br>• No H&S lead with H&S oversight (recruitment failure)<br>• Trend Lag – behind the curve<br>• Condition & Maintenance of Facilities (unplanned closures) |

Whilst the two workshops identified different  issues, potentially influenced by different work locations and experiences some common themes emerged as highlighted in the Word Cloud below.

It is noted that there are some recurring themes identified within the two workshop engagement sessions to those highlighted in the corporate Staff Temperature Check Survey undertaken in 2024. Of the total survey respondents, Leisure & Health made up c. 16.6% of the total, with 39.1% of staff from this service area responding to the survey.

Comparing the 2024 corporate Staff Temperature Check Survey with feedback from the workshops the main similarities were as indicated below.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Teamwork<br>• Colleagues<br>• Friendly Environment<br>• Job Security<br>• Job Satisfaction | | • Resources (staff/time)<br>• Communication<br>• Recognition & Reward<br>• Poor IT Systems<br>• Don't Feel Listened To | |

The implementation of the corporate Workforce Strategy and actions that can implemented within One Leisure can help to address some of the negative issues raised.

It should be noted, that whilst the 2024 Survey highlighted Training & Development and Incremental Progression amongst the top 10 areas for improvement, career progression opportunities were highlighted as a positive in the workshop sessions, following the One Leisure restructure.

## Proposed Priority Actions

Senior Management of One Leisure recognise the need for further improvement actions as part of the on-going service transformation journey and have identified the following actions against key issues identified as indicated below.

| Issue | Proposed Action | Timescale |
|---|---|---|
| **Capital Investment** | • Minor Projects completed at St Ives (Indoor) and St Neots.<br>• Huntingdon Leisure Centre - potential Major Project to create a Sport & Health Hub. | • Completed January 2025<br>• RIBA Stage 1 Feasibility Study completed April 2025<br>• Full Feasibility complete September 2025<br>• Planning Application Submission December 2025 |
| **Communication** | • Staff/Managers<br>• PDR<br>• Planning of Campaigns & Initiatives | • Monthly Site Team Meetings & Manager Meetings May 2025<br>• PDRs in place as part of 'My Conversation' May 2025<br>• Quarterly & Annual Planning Meetings in place December 2025 |
| **Facility Maintenance** | • Dilapidations<br>• Sub-contractor capacity & service contracts | • Initial Programme April 2025 (annually)<br>• Review suppliers April 2025 (annually) |
| **Marketing** | • Review resources<br>• Marketing Strategy developed<br>• Develop a Plan to increase Social Media presence and use of Artificial Intelligence | • April 2025<br>• February 2026<br>• September 2025 |
| **Technology** | • Upgrade of LMS (Gladstone)<br>• Review One Leisure App capabilities<br>• Launch Gladstone *Go Mobile* App | • April 2025<br>• April 2025<br>• December 2025<br>• January 2026 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | • Procure Tablets to support sales and customer service | |

## A Vision Statement for One Leisure

A vision statement defines an organisations or service's ambition and set the direction for future service delivery, it should be clear and succinct and something all stakeholders can identify with. The staff engagement workshops developed some options for One Leisure that have been interpreted below.

a) Supply the best sustainable service to our local community providing great experiences.

b) Deliver the best possible service to our customers and provide positive experiences.

c) Deliver the best possible service to our customers and create enjoyable positive experiences.

d) Provide a positive, value for money customer experience for all our communities that is sustainable for the future.

e) Provide a positive, value for money experience for all our customers that is that is sustainable for the future.

f) Deliver high quality, customer led, affordable services and facilities for the local community.

Following consultation with key Members and staff a vison statement for One Leisure will be determined.

## Tools & Actions to Succeed

This element of the staff workshops used the themes emerging from the SWOT analysis and draft Vision Statements, explore some possible actions on the key issues to support service delivery improvements as highlighted below.

| **What Needs to Happen?** | **Develop a 3 Year Marketing Plan<br>1 Year Diary Plan** |
|---|---|
| **Who Needs to Do It?** | Senior Management |
| **What Are the Barriers?** | Capacity; Resources – only have a 22hr post Marketing Assistant post |
| **What Are the Solutions?** | • Realistic Marketing Budget (2% of turnover)?<br>• Provide a comprehensive marketing function<br>• Directly Employ<br>• Procure a Leisure Marketing Agency |

| **What Needs to Happen?** | **Internal Communications Structure & Processes** |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| **Who Needs to Do It?** | • Co-designed with Senior Management |
| **What Are the Barriers?** | • Capacity – lack of time to deliver<br>• Commitment to deliver |
| **What Are the Solutions?** | • Invest in the Comms Process<br>• Two Way Feedback Mechanism/Process<br>• Staff Forums<br>• Site Plans up/down the structure<br>• Engage with colleagues/teams<br>• Accountability to communicate – (who owns communication)?<br>• Create a culture where it is OK to Challenge |
| | |
| **What Needs to Happen?** | • **Improve infrastructure & expand**<br>• **Review staff resources**<br>• **Re-evaluate Finances**<br>• **Respond to leisure trends quicker**<br>• **Training & development of staff**<br>• **Have a Listening Leadership Team**<br>• **Co-design projects and the future**<br>• **True Engagement**<br>• **Stronger Customer Focus** |
| **Who Needs to Do It?** | • Senior Management<br>• Site Managers<br>• HDC Financial Support for Capex<br>• Customers as Active Participants/Stakeholders<br>• Community Partnerships |
| **What Are the Barriers?** | • Resources<br>• Strategic Leadership<br>• Understanding/Appreciation of site limitations/potential<br>• Limited Active Listening<br>• Site Communications |
| **What Are the Solutions?** | • Engagement – Active Listening<br>• Realistic and achievable budgets/targets<br>• Site Led decision making – delegation<br>• Sharing the Vision and Information<br>• Communication – true engagement<br>• Effective use of Technology/Digital<br>• Measure Outcomes<br>• Sustainable Service |

## One Leisure Design Principles

Design Principles set the framework and act as the foundation for all future strategic service development decisions and improvement plans that support the service objectives.

Examples of Design Principles from a local authority IT department and a retail organisation were provided to stimulate the discussion and conclude with a draft set of Design Principles derived from the workshops as illustrated below.

**Draft One Leisure Design Principles**

- Design our service offer around the customer.
- Provide a range of services and activities that increase usage.
- Design and deliver a service that support financial sustainability.
- Understand and 'live' the Customer Journey.
- Make it simple and easy to engage and do business with us.
- Embrace the use of technology to improve customer communication and promote the service offer.
- Have consistency of process and core standards across the service.
- Invest in our staff to ensure they have the tools and knowledge to deliver.
- Welcome customer feedback.
- Have a 'Can Do' and 'Fix It' culture.

## Values

There was clear agreement that the corporate *icare* values were well considered, relevant and that were applicable for One Leisure.

The values have been in place for c. 4 years; however, it is questionable on how universally they are applied across One Leisure or the authority per se, this may in part be in relation to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The lack of corporate implementation of the PDR process to formally record and acknowledge or challenge delivery of living the values, is now being addressed through the implementation of the Workforce Strategy.

## Customer Charter

From the workshops with staff, a draft Customer Charter was developed for consideration. In line with good practice within the leisure industry it is proposed that once approved the Customer Charter is displayed in all One Leisure facilities and used to measure delivery of these commitments through annual customer surveys, mystery shopper visits etc.

**Customer Charter**

**We Will:**

- Design our service offer around the customer.
- Provide accessible and affordable services.
- Understand and 'live' the Customer Journey.
- Make it simple and easy to access our services.
- Welcome customer feedback.
- Embrace the use of technology to enhance the customer experience.
- Have consistency of process and core standards across the service.
- Invest in our staff to ensure they have the tools and knowledge to deliver the service.
- Have a 'Can Do' and 'Fix It' culture.
- Not tolerate any form of discrimination.

## Other Issues/Actions

In summary a number of other issues and actions are list for consideration:

- Understand and map the customer journey for each element of the service offer
- Implement the principles around customer excellence – '10ft rule' of engagement
- Review and communicate the Digital Plan
- Fast Forward digital agenda – remove paper systems
- Automate processes where possible – through co-creation with front line staff
- Integrate AI into the service
- GOO – invest in staff L&D to Grow Our Own and improve skills/capability
- Have a core One Leisure On-Boarding/Induction process
- Push for implementation of PDRs as part of corporate roll out – be a pilot
- Transparent measurement and comparison of outcomes & performance
- Staff input into target setting and KPI's
- Consider reinstating the *'You Said – We Did'* customer feedback mechanism
- Have a better connection between senior management and staff to support a cultural shift and alignment to a shared vision and set of actions.

- Have a Year Planner of Events and Actions (including the mundane) to allow sufficient time to respond/deliver effectively, co-created for better outcomes.

Although outside of the client brief and not explored in any detail, the staff engagement workshops did generate some issues for consideration re: capital investment  some of which are were highlighted in other aspects of the workshops as indicated below:

- 2  elements for facility investment
    - repair/dilapidations/maintain
    - Improve/expand
- Refurbish/upgrade to ‘Club Class’ changing facilities
- Increase Pool Capacity
- Learner Pools need  moveable floors to optimise use
- Gym expansions
- Welcoming – entrance/exterior view/lighting
- Infrastructure – car parking capacity; EV charging points etc.
- Involve site staff in capital investment thinking/design
- St Neots – uplighters on external roadside sign
- Future of small ATP @St Neots to be reviewed

# Appendices

## Appendix 1 - Consultees

| **One Leisure Management Team** | |
|---|---|
| Leigh Allaker | Business & Operations Manager |
| Gregg Holland | Head of Leisure, Health & Environment |
| **Workshop Attendees** | |
| Luke Bryant | Recreation Assistant |
| Ben Channon | Business Analyst |
| Dan Clough | Supervisor |
| Edward Cochrane | Supervisor |
| Dean Collins | Assistant Manager |
| David Crooke | Centre Manger |
| Rob Duckett | Centre Manager |
| Anita Fisher | Hospitality Supervisor |
| Carly Harlock | Supervisor |
| Sam Harrison | Supervisor |
| Paul Howard | Activities Manager |
| Scott James | Supervisor |
| Kat Mitchell | Supervisor |
| David Newman | Assistant Manager |
| Evie Ruffles | Recreation Assistant |
| Lisa Ruffles | Cleaner |
| Toby Summerfield | Recreation Assistant |
| Natalie Tailor | General Manager |
| Rob Ure | Fitness Consultant |

# Appendix 2 –Staff Engagement Workshops - Slide Deck

## One Leisure
## Design Principles
## Staff Engagement

25/26th March 2025

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Agenda

- Welcome & Purpose of Today
- Introductions
- SWOT Analysis
- Vision
  - *Service aspirations*

  *(see Corporate Plan & One Leisure Business Plan)*
- Tools & Actions to Succeed
- Design Principles
- Values
- Customer Charter

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## SWOT Analysis

| Strengths | Weakneses |
|---|---|
| Opportunities | Threats |

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Corporate Priorities

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## One Leisure Priorities 2023-24

1. **Digital** Innovation
2. **People** Focussed
3. **Service** Modernisation
4. **Commercial** Sustainability
5. **Community** Provision

**Are these still right for the next 3 Years?**

**Are there any others?**

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Vision for One Leisure

## Tools & Actions to Suceed

- What Need To Happen?
- Who Needs To Do It?
- What Are The Barriers?
- What Are The Solutions?

## Design Principles – ICT Example (1)

**Customer first** – Our website is built around what our customers want from us, not what we want to present to them

**Mobile first** – Over half our customers use smartphones to our website. We need to build online services that work on the suits these devices

**Transaction first** – As a local authority, customers interact with us when they have a task to complete. Our website needs to make these tasks and transactions easy to find and to complete

**Data driven design** – We use data to inform and support the decisions we make about our website including styling, design, content and navigation

**Just the right amount** – Our website focuses on the services we provide and lets customers move from interest to action at any point

## Design Principles – ICT Example (2)

**What would the web do** – Customers expect our website and online services to perform as well as the other websites they use day to day. This means looking beyond what we want and puts the online customer at the heart of what we are doing

**Do the hard work to make it easy** – Making something look simple is easy. Making something simple to use is much harder – especially when the underlying systems are complex – but that's what we should be doing

**Better, better, best** – We use a continuous improvement approach and constantly review our website and all its content to make it better

**Inclusive and accessible** – Our website is designed and built for the way people use it. It takes into account all users and the different ways they access it. It meets the AA standard of WGAC 2.1

- **Consistent** – Although we use different templates, websites and portals, the design and build of our site is based on a seamless customer journey

## Design Principles – Retail Example

- Mark out the customer journey through your store
- Use eye-catching merchandise to attract your customer's attention
- Slow down the customer journey using your store's layout
- Use the right side of the store to your advantage
- Embrace boldness and creativity
- Use negative space effectively
- Embrace your space's limitations

## One Leisure Design Principles

- Design Our Service Offer Around Customer Needs
- Understand and 'Live' the Customer Journey - making it easy

## Corporate Values

Inspiring • Collaborative • Accountable • Enterprising • Respectful

icare

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

**i** **INSPIRING**
**We have** genuine pride and passion for public service, doing the best we can for our customers.

**c** **COLLABORATIVE**
**We achieve** much more by working together and this allows us to provide the best service for customers.

**a** **ACCOUNTABLE**
**We take** personal responsibility for our work and our decisions and we deliver on our commitments to customers.

**r** **RESPECTFUL**
**We respect** people's differences and are considerate to their needs.

**e** **ENTERPRISING**
**We use** drive and energy to challenge the norm and adapt to changing circumstances. We are always ready for challenges and opportunities and we embrace them.

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Customer Charter

- Succinct & Clear Messages
- Single Sentence
- Single Page-not a book
- Two Approaches (there maybe more

| | |
|---|---|
| • The Service<br>• We Will<br>• Facilities<br>• Expectations of the Customer<br>• Contact Point | We Will…… |

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Customer Charter (We Will)

We will:

- Ensure experiencesboth safe and enjoyable.
- Ensure our sites are clean and safe.
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere at all sites.
- Listen to our customers.
- Give prompt, helpful and friendly response to all enquiries, be it in person, over the telephone, via social media and email enquiries.
- Provide a feedback form on our website to give customers the opportunity to feedback electronically if preferred.
- Regularly update and publish any changes to the service offer or fees as soon as possible.
- Keep personal information safe and comply with the UK Data Protection Act.
- Comply with all current relevant statutory legislation.
- Provide equality of opportunity and treatment for all,.
- Operate a Zero Tolerance policy on any form of discrimination.
- Continually strive to improve our service for our customers.

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Thank You For Participating

Huntingdonshire DISTRICT COUNCIL