



## Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Marianne Hesketh, Director of Communities	Councillor Lesley McKay, Resources Portfolio Holder and Councillor Lynne Bowen, Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder	4 April 2024

### UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Development of a Feel Good Factory at Thornton Leisure Centre

**Key decision:** Yes

#### 1. Purpose of report

**1.1** To seek approvals to facilitate the purchase and installation of a new Feel Good Factory gym facility at Thornton Leisure Centre together with associated running costs for the first year. Costs of £185,622 to be funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), with the capital programme for 2024/25 to be updated to reflect that this includes spend of £117,543.

#### 2. Council priorities

**2.1** Provide opportunities for people to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

**2.2** Improve our leisure facilities ensuring they meet the needs of our residents and visitors.

#### 3. Recommendations

**3.1** That approval is given to purchase and install specialist, power assisted Feel Good Factory exercise equipment at Thornton Leisure Centre at a cost of £106,857 (plus 10% contingency of £10,686). The total cost is £117,543 and this is to be reflected in the capital programme for 2024/25, funded by an allocation from UKSPF.

**3.2** That approval is given to fund staffing, marketing and service contract costs of £61,890 (plus contingency of £6,189). The total cost is £68,079 to support the first 12 months of the operation of the Feel Good Factory funded by an allocation from the revenue funding from UKSPF.

- 3.3** That approval is given by the Resources Portfolio Holder to allow the procurement under exemptions to contract procedures, contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules on the grounds that: “the goods, works or services are of a specialised nature carried out by only one or a limited number of firms with no reasonably satisfactory alternatives available.”

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1** Wyre has an ageing population profile. 28% of residents are aged 65+ (this is already the highest proportion in Lancashire and this number is expected to rise to around 36% by 2043).
- 4.2** There are higher than average rates of people with a long-term limiting illness in the Borough (26% of residents compared to 18% nationally).
- 4.3** NHS profiling for Wyre highlights that on 11 of 34 key indicators Wyre is performing significantly worse than the England average. The poor performing indicators include: life expectancy for both males and females; under 75's mortality rate from all causes; mortality rate from cancer and all cardiovascular diseases.
- 4.4** The higher than average predicted increase in the proportion of older people expected over the next ten years in Wyre is also likely to result in a higher than average rate of increase in the prevalence of diabetes as it is with many other diseases affecting older people (including dementia, circulatory disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, osteoarthritis and cancer).
- 4.5** A higher percentage of the Wyre population is inactive compared to England and the North West and therefore a lower percentage is considered to be active. 25% of the adult population of Wyre are inactive currently and for those with a disability or long-term health condition this rises to 40%.
- 4.6** Research gathered to support the development of the Wyre Moving More Strategy from local social prescribing teams and the residents' Moving More survey sets a clear challenge to council services to deliver active environments for those who are not physically active and find the prospect of going to a leisure centre daunting. For these residents a re-orientation of facilities incorporating options such as a Feel Good Factory will be much more attractive and better able to cater for those who are less physically active.
- 4.7** Loneliness and a lack of social connection are also issues for many of those in the target customer base / resident groups and the opportunity to exercise and tone up in the relaxed and sociable setting of a Feel Good Factory will help address these issues too.

**4.8** Across the country, including in Lancashire, a number of local authorities have invested in Feel Good Factory gym studios from well-known fitness provider, Innerva. Innerva are a well-established UK designer and manufacturer of power assisted exercise (PAE) equipment. Gyms installed with such equipment have been evidenced to bring hundreds of new members to facilities. These facilities target the over 55s (the active ageing market), people living with disabilities, people with poor mobility or long-term health conditions and indeed anyone who feels intimidated by a traditional 'gym' environment and wants to try a different and fun way to exercise.

**4.9** In particular, Feel Good Factories are working successfully in Blackpool, Pendle and Lancaster. Contact has been made with these areas for research purposes. Active Blackpool has had Feel Good Factories in place at two of its leisure centres now for over eight years and they have 715 members currently. The Blackpool facility is a useful local example of provision of a combination of appropriate facilities (dedicated health and fitness space), programming (gentle exercise, injury rehabilitation, weight loss classes) and incentives (leisure card, digital app, health referrals) to deliver physical activity interventions for residents that are either presently inactive or returning to physical activity. They report that the facilities are very well used and popular with members.

**4.10** A Feel Good Factory consists of a range of power assisted gym equipment that provides a 'helping hand' in a low impact, full-body workout circuit. The equipment is electronically controlled and facilitates safe and enjoyable exercise, ideal for the target audience. Each machine works a variety of muscle groups. As all equipment is used in a seated or recumbent position there is reduced stress on the body and lower impact on joints. The equipment is safe for all age groups and abilities as users do not need to provide the motive force to overcome inertia. There are no weight stacks to control, just safe and effective power assisted technology.

**4.11** The installation of a Feel Good Factory at Thornton will provide an opportunity for us to introduce a new, innovative exercise offer for older people, for people with disabilities and those with long term conditions to become more active. If it is successful we could then introduce other schemes at other centres.

**4.12** It is anticipated that the scheme will help to reduce the burden that ageing and associated health conditions will place on local services, including upon services in the NHS and Social Care.

**4.13** Feel Good Factories work best on the ground floor of a leisure centre. An ideal, and currently under-used, room has been identified at Thornton Leisure Centre. The adjacent café area will also create an ideal social space for participants to meet up before or after their exercise sessions.

Evidence suggests there are around 24,200 potential Feel Good Factory customers within a 3km radius of Thornton Leisure Centre and these

- 4.14** potential users include a high proportion of residents from groups who have more disposable time and income to spend on fitness solutions.

Attracting 340 standalone members (1.4% of the potential users within the 3km radius) to the new Feel Good Factory would generate over

- 4.15** £102,000 revenue per annum, based on a £25 per month price point. This level of income would enable the Feel Good Factory to cover the annual costs of the staffing and promotion of the facility after year one on an ongoing basis. In terms of the income and breaking even point, examples from a Feel Good Factory in another council area indicate that at month nine, salary costs of £4,000 per month would be covered. The studio will hopefully provide new income generation to support the leisure centre from a loyal older and disabled person exercise market (with little or no competition).

Recent success of a similar scheme at The Abbey Leisure Centre in Durham has been highlighted. This facility opened in August 2023 and

- 4.16** they currently have 140+ members and climbing. Durham are so impressed with the success of their 'Move Hub' that they are rolling it out across other sites in their portfolio.

Funding would enable Fylde Coast YMCA to staff the Feel Good Factory to ensure members are assessed, inducted and supported to become

- 4.17** more active in a safe and supervised environment. The staff would be fully experienced and qualified in exercise referral. This would enable the YMCA to create referral pathways for specialist groups from health professionals such as those working in cardiac rehabilitation and stroke recovery. Professionals such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists would also be able to bring clients to the facility on a fee paying basis. It is intended that the predicted income from the Feel Good Factory would enable it to become self-sustaining after year one, with no detrimental impact on the operational subsidy.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

- 5.1** It is proposed that, utilising UKSPF funding, the council will purchase Feel Good Factory gym equipment from Innerva at a capital cost of £117,543. The price quoted includes: room preparation, re-decoration, delivery and installation of equipment, a training package for instructors, a standard warranty and a 5-year service package.
- 5.2** It is proposed that the council will provide a contribution to the YMCA for staffing the Feel Good Factory for the first 12 months of operation to ensure adequate capacity, full training and an inclusive and welcoming environment at the facility. This will be funded from UKSPF funding with an expectation that the service will be self-sustaining after year one.

## 6. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 6.1** Do nothing – this was discounted as it risks the further decline of health outcomes in Wyre and would miss the opportunity to generate much needed additional income for the leisure centres.
- 6.2** The space could be rented out to a commercial partner for use as office space, this could potentially bring in £6,000 per year but the benefits are outweighed by the Feel Good Factory proposal.
- 6.3** The space available could be used as another spinning bikes studio but this would not bring in a new audience. We are looking to attract older people, people with health conditions and people with disabilities; who do not currently use our centres, to come and use our facilities. We have already invested in new spinning bikes so another studio would add to our current offer for members but wouldn't bring in substantial numbers of new members as spinning is already being invested in and will attract new members as a result of that investment.

<b>Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications</b>			
Finance	The capital and revenue costs are as indicated in the following table:		
	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>COST</u> £	<u>COST TYPE</u>
	Equipment – year 1 cost only	91,857	Capital
	Room preparation – year 1 cost only	15,000	Capital
	Staffing costs - annual cost	47,000	Revenue
	Marketing and promotion - annual cost	5,000	Revenue
	5 year annual service contract – years 1-5	9,890	Revenue
	Contingency of 10%	16,875	Capital and Revenue
	TOTAL COST	185,622	
	The council will fund via the UKSPF allocation for Thornton Leisure Centre and the capital programme for 2024/25 and the revenue estimates will be updated accordingly.		
Legal	On termination of the leisure agreement, the equipment will be owned by the Council.		
Climate Change	There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report.		

### Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with an x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	✓
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	✓
ICT	x
data protection	x

### Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	Date	where available for inspection
None		

### List of appendices

None