

medlock leisure centre

In this Q and A session Neil Chaisty, Head of Tameside Sports Trust, candidly answers questions about the development delivered by Pulse.

Q How did you go about selecting a partner for the redevelopment?

A We conducted a rigorous selection procedure and went through a full European Procurement Process that included representatives from the Council. The decision was based on a number of areas including value for money, affordability, quality, project management, design, on-going support and capacity to deliver.

Q Why was Pulse selected for the contract?

A We shortlisted 3 companies and evaluated their bids. Pulse was chosen because they addressed the full requirements of the Trust and also offered the best solution for delivering a high quality end product and on-going support. With the additional benefit of the Investment and Services Partnership that required no capital investment from the Trust, there really was no other choice for us.

Q What are your views on the finished facility?

A Pulse has delivered an inspiring facility that has raised the bar in terms of standard of facilities and services - we can now rival those in the private sector. The development has raised the profile of Medlock Leisure Centre in the community and has been used to demonstrate to the Council what this type of partnership can achieve.

Q What did you think about the on-going support services provided by Pulse?

A The Active brand has really brought together all of the services offered by the Trust under one cohesive banner. This has helped us to better market our facilities across the range of centres that we have, not just at Medlock. The Active brand has provided a real impetus for the marketing of all of our facilities and they are all reaping the rewards of this. The on-going

promotions and training provided by Pulse has helped Medlock to ensure they are staying one step ahead of the local competition.

Q Are you pleased with the overall penetration of membership into your target market?

A The mapping that Pulse provided us with has helped us to better understand our membership profile. It has also revealed that we are well on our way to meeting many of the Government's community, social inclusion, health and CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment) targets.

Q How does the refurbishment of Medlock fit into the Trust's overall plans?

A The refurbishment of Medlock Leisure Centre is part of our massive drive to improve the leisure facilities and services for the local community. Pulse is helping make a difference by modernising our leisure facilities and services where it really counts.

Q What are your future plans for the leisure facilities in the Tameside area?

A As a direct result of the successful refurbishment of Medlock Leisure Centre, the Trust and the Council, in partnership with Pulse, are finalising investment proposals of £6.1 million at three other key sites under our control.

Pulse Involvement

- £1 million investment
- Design and build
- Fitness equipment supply and Service
- Sales and marketing support
- On-site staff training
- Membership services
- Direct Debit Collections

Results

- 1440 current members
- 32 weekly classes
- Multi-site membership introduced
- Membership over all 6 sites up 20%
- GP referrals introduced
- Three new major investments planned

medlock leisure centre

city centre leisure facility development



Neil Chaisty
Head of Tameside
Sports Trust

Neil Chaisty, Head of the Trust, said, "The refurbishment of Medlock Leisure Centre is part of our massive drive to improve the leisure facility and services for the local community. Pulse is helping make a difference by modernising our leisure facilities and services where it really counts."

Built in the early 1980s, Medlock Leisure Centre was historically a dry sports facility. Thanks to a three-way collaboration between Tameside Sports Trust, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and leading leisure solutions company, Pulse, the site has received a million pound make-over transforming it into a state-of-the-art health and leisure facility.

This is the story behind the successful partnership. We'll establish the solutions implemented, the quality of the finishes and other interesting information.

The impressive centre boasts a new £3 million swimming pool funded by the Council and a further investment from Pulse of £1 million for the refurbishment of the existing dry sports facility and the provision of a new health and fitness studio, dedicated changing, reception, lounge and refreshments area.



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medlock leisure centre

facility design & construction

The project at Medlock was about transforming the facility and providing a flagship leisure centre for the Trust's new Active brand. Part of the challenge was to overcome public perception that redevelopment simply meant new equipment and a lick of paint. Pulse worked alongside the Trust with support from Tameside Council to complete a total transformation from the highest quality fitness equipment to contemporary internal décor and first class external building finishes - a truly redeveloped leisure facility.

Due to the flexibility of Pulse Select, the Trust was able to select a range of services that

were best suited to its requirements. Pulse can provide everything from design and build, site surveys, feasibility studies, interior design through to marketing, training and sales generation.

The overall objectives for Medlock were to improve the range and quality of facilities and activities available to the local community, to increase attendance, to improve the financial viability of the facility and provide equipment that was accessible and DDA compliant. Pulse was specifically chosen for this project by the Trust because they offered the best solution for delivering a high quality end product.



internal décor, design & finish

In the refurbished centre, the first floor provides new male, female and disabled changing facilities, a dance studio for workout classes and 30 studio cycling bikes. The changing rooms offer some of the most up to date internal finishes including themed and branded signage, modern push button vandal resistant shower systems, high quality, spacious and secure lockers and non-slip tiled floors with underfloor heating. This quality is extended to all areas of the centre including the light and airy dance studio that has a sprung floor and mirrors. This room plays host to around 30 classes a week, four of which are 'cycle workouts'. The overall feel of the reception and lounge area has raised the bar for local authorities, providing an experience for members that is second to none.



sales, marketing & staff training support

Pulse put together a comprehensive sales and marketing programme to ensure that the centre opened with impressive membership figures from day one. "The launch promotion Pulse implemented resulted in nearly 1000 new members," comments Neil Chaisty. This launch plan included the development of the new Active brand for the Trust that works across all of the sporting facilities that the Trust offers including wet and dry sports. Promotional material is also supplied to the site on an on-going basis to provide support to the gym staff.



staff training

The Trust took on an Investment and Services Partnership that required no capital investment but delivered an exceptional facility with on-going support for the centre. This support includes a training programme that is delivered both before the centre opens, and on a continuous basis for all the gym staff. Before the centre opened, all the staff were trained on how to use the new equipment and basic maintenance of equipment. Pulse also offers a number of accredited training courses that provide the gym staff with new skills.



membership summary

Once the site was open, Pulse analysed the membership data for the fitness suite by mapping the membership data using GIS mapping capabilities. The results of the mapping exercise demonstrate that the centre is attracting a large percentage of members from some of the most deprived areas in the UK. It also demonstrates that most of the membership is gained from a 2 mile radius with the highest number of members only having a 10 minute journey to the facility. This information helps to formulate future campaigns and enables the Trust to better understand its community and the social issues important to them.

The key information feeding into this map includes:

- The total population of Tameside is 213,045
- The 16-24 age group is evenly spread across the borough
- The over 60 age groups close to the facility do not appear to be drawn as direct debit members to the facility

By overlaying these results on the Indices of Deprivation, Pulse was able to ascertain that:

- 11% of members are from the top 10% of deprived areas in the UK
- 22% of members come from the top 20% of deprived areas in the UK
- 87% of members are from the top 50% of deprived areas in the UK

Despite the potential lack of affluence within the Droylesden area where Medlock is situated, and the adverse affect that this has on health and car ownership, the plan put in place by Pulse still attracted members of the community to join Medlock Leisure Centre.



Figure 1 - membership by type and location - The above map indicates that the majority of members are from within a 2-kilometre radius of the facility.

Radial catchment	% Membership
1km	42.81%
2km	71.66%
3km	82.75%
5km	92.81%
over 5km	7.19%

Figure 2 - membership profile by distance

Age Band	% of Membership
16 - 25	27.23%
26 - 40	42.83%
41 - 60	27.13%
Over 60	2.81%

Figure 3 - membership profile by age band

