

Live Borders

Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023

Live Borders is a charity. Every penny you spend with us is reinvested into supporting active, creative and healthy communities in the Scottish Borders.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document offers a summary of the development work undertaken with our staff combined with the executive team's interpretation of the opportunities and challenges we face.

It offers a vision for building on the first year of the new organisation and the amalgamation of two operations with a complex mix of facilities; an expanded estate; a large and diverse work force, all seen within the context of reduced public sector funding, increasing demands on preventative and remedial services.

2.0 Where are we now?

- 2.1 Live Borders (LB) was established on 1 April 2016 bringing together Borders Sports and Leisure Trust and arts, heritage, libraries and culture services, previously operated as part of Scottish Borders Council.
- 2.2 Following the development of a new management structure three directorates have been established with personnel in post from January 2017. These are managed services, business services and commercial services. The first year of operation has been occupied with the process of transition into a single organisation, combined with overseeing a reduction in the workforce through a programme of ERVS (early retirement and voluntary severance) and the next phases of recalibrating an organisation with fewer people and finite resources.
- 2.3 In a challenging and unsettling environment, staff have made good progress with questioning what we do and considering new ways of working. Our amalgamation offers us a unique opportunity to lead, in partnership with the community and others, a new and modernising agenda. These early years are a time for us to establish our reputation, shape our future and establish a new agenda for community wellbeing and prosperity, and as such those goals need to be reflected in our strategic plan.
- 2.4 Our turnover is £10.5m (2016/17) but with the largest percentage of our income originating from the service payment of a sole contract (SBC) with an understanding that our service payment will reduce over the next two years by at least 10%. As consequence we must approach our planning on the basis of the potential for our single contract fee to be reduced by as much as 50% by 2023.
- 2.5 We have many strengths; our people; the spread of services and locations that we operate; we have many iconic locations with a breadth of cultural assets that can set us apart from competitors; furthermore, we have the unique advantage of operating as a charity with an ability to demonstrate tangible social and community benefits based on an inclusive approach to everything we do.

- 2.6 But we also face some challenges: an ageing estate; people adjusting to a considerable pace of change; a wide portfolio of activity, service delivery responsibilities and further work to be done on analysis of data to make evidence based decisions. Notably, we have underplayed our charitable status and need to communicate with the wider community and customers the relevance and benefits of our charitable status.
- 2.7 Naturally, our future plans must grasp the opportunities offered from amalgamation: joint working; improvements in efficiency and productivity; joint buying power and the range of activity we can offer people to stimulate engagement in sports and culture. Within this context our plan will resonate with the Scottish Government's vision for a Scotland where more people are more active more often. Furthermore, the sports and cultural activity we offer will continue to contribute to the five strategic objectives that brings together so many organisations that are in receipt of public funds – a vision for a wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and strong, and greener Scotland.

3.0 Strategic context – wider agenda

- 3.1 Our work in the Scottish Borders is influenced by a number of local and global challenges. We operate in a rural area with major towns of Hawick and Galashiels each having a population of less than 15,000 and overall population in the area of 114,000. The rest of the region is characterised by small towns and villages with large rural areas in-between and population numbers that are low. We operate facilities (leisure, libraries, archive, halls, community centres and museums) in numerous locations, so although our spread across the region is considerable, we have areas where there are multi-sites operated by different teams. The implications of a relatively low population density, and the urban/rural profile, has consequences for how we operate our services in the future. Moreover, providing such a considerable amount of access across multi-sites with a small population may no longer be sustainable in its current form and new ways of operating and delivery must be developed.
- 3.2 The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation and still notes that there have only been slight shifts year on year in addressing inequalities in the area. However, when we consider the rural environment we operate in, levels of deprivation are perceived to be higher. As a consequence, this should add to our resolve to work in partnership with others to support the reduction of deprivation and inequalities.

- 3.3 Economic growth in the South of Scotland has lagged behind Scotland as a whole. The region is more dependent on public services, agriculture, tourism and retail to generate its output. The economy is characterised by a large number of small businesses; employment has been falling but incomes remain static or is reducing for many as pay fails to keep up with inflation. However, the development of a regional south of Scotland economic development agency, with appointment of a board by Autumn 2018, will help support economic growth in the areas and transformative performance for business. Furthermore, the planned development of housing in Tweedbank and its close proximity to Galashiels will see the combined population of these areas grow substantially by 2022, creating a significant opportunity for developments on this site. The excellent transport links via the Borders Railway can only add to the attraction of the Galashiels/Tweedbank area.
- 3.4 At a national policy level our strategy takes cognisance of the Active Scotland outcomes and will also respond to the developing national cultural strategy currently being formulated through consultation by the Scottish Government. We are also mindful and supportive of the Creative Scotland strategy that focuses on the development of excellence and experimentation across all arts forms; equality of access for all to creative activity; place making and quality of life being transformed through creativity; diverse and skilled leadership and workforce; and finally how creativity can be used to connect Scotland to the rest of the world.
- 3.5 At a regional level, SBC outcomes linked to our service level agreement still remain central to this plan. Our role in the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) will be critical in shaping outcomes as we focus our resources to deliver across the geographical areas detailed in these plans – Teviotdale/Liddesdale, Cheviot, Berwickshire, Tweeddale and Eildon. The strategic vision is for *improved quality of life for those who are living in the most deprived areas* and focusing on efforts to make people fitter, healthier, resilient and more connected with their community and the countryside. These are all areas where Live Borders has the ability to make a significant contribution.
- 3.6 The Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership is working towards a far more joined-up approach to the delivery of a service for the future, across the same localities as the CPP. An action plan has been developed for consultation and is focused on the delivery of a wider range of care and support options to enable people to stay independent and in their homes longer; improving availability of services and in particularly locally delivered services; and finally the range of housing options available. In particular, the development of “What Matters” hubs could be supported by the effective engagement of multi-site Live Borders facilities across the region where the breadth of our facilities and services can positively augment the offer intended by the partnership. Our engagement with this partnership is crucial to ensure culture, physical activity and sport are recognised and utilised across the partnership for the role they can and do have in preventative and rehabilitative interventions for a society with increasing health and social care needs.

- 3.7 The Children and Young People’s Strategic Leadership Group (CYPLG), led by SBC, brings together senior managers from agencies across a range of service provisions for children, young people and their families. The Leadership Group works in line with the community planning process for the Scottish Borders and provides leadership to create and deliver an Integrated Children and Young People’s Plan. An action plan is being developed and it too focuses on delivering outcomes through co-designed services and the development of parental and child involvement in service. Live Borders is a core member of the CYPLG will engage in this partnership to support and deliver on a joined-up approach to development of service for young people and their families.
- 3.8 Wider area plans are focused on developing the **economy, health and wellbeing, community safety and neighbourhood and community**. Moreover, the focus is moving towards a more robust evidence base, adopting a preventative approach; early intervention in the health and well-being arena, identifying and tackling inequalities and where possible developing a co-created solution to wider community issues. Partnership working and collaborative partners will become ubiquitous to creating sustainable solutions.
- 3.9 The **health and wellbeing agenda** continues to be recognised as one of the most significant challenges for the nation and the Scottish Government continues to make the links that improvements to health and wellbeing will help support the country to be a successful and economically successful nation. We, as a society, know that being physically and socially active is good for us. We get physical and mental health benefits; we sleep better; diet improves when we are active and connected to others. Put simply, when we are active physically and socially, we enter a positive cycle of improved health and make positive life choices.

Given that we know physical activity is so important to our health, and that lack of physical activity results in poor health experiences for individuals and large health care costs for society, we need to engage more people in more active lives. The ongoing imperative within our strategy will be how to position and enable physical activity as accessible, desirable and sustainable for those in society who are most disengaged and at-risk of non-engagement.

3.10 **Creativity as a catalyst for change**

Creative and cultural engagement impacts positively on our general wellbeing and helps to reinforce our sense of identity and resilience both at an individual and a community level. Cultural participation is known to bring benefits in learning and education; there is a significant association with good health and satisfaction with life. Maintaining the quality and diversity of cultural offerings in conjunction with enabling a strong engagement with cultural activities helps to promote Scotland on an international stage as a modern dynamic nation.

3.11 **Place making**

Our role in shaping this will be significant as we continue to operate and develop some of the most culturally significant buildings and civic spaces in the region. The Borders countryside, towns, landscape, people, culture and heritage are a huge draw to those living, working and visiting the area. Much of what we deliver in the region contributes to maintaining the energy in a community and also supporting the community to revitalise, plan and create more vibrant space. This involves working with people who live in areas to discover their needs and to support the communities of interest. The wider Galashiels' masterplan and the revitalisation of the town, combined with the development of the Great Tapestry of Scotland project, will deliver tangible benefits to the town and our role in the delivery of this cannot be underestimated.

- 3.12 **Growth from tourism:** developing our proposition for the tourism market will be critical to the growth of the organisation and attracting more tourists will be vital in developing a more sustainable business model. The Borders Railway has had a considerable impact in this regard with growth coming in day visitor, spend on food and drink and days out overall. Our development of the visitor offer must take account of the key themes driven at a national level and focusing on growth markets; providing authentic visitor experiences; improving the customer journey and building capabilities in relation to the quality of the offer, marketing and sustainable tourism.

In particular, our local community should be viewed as a significant asset in helping the area create authentic and relevant experiences for both day/overnight visitors and we must again work in partnership to deliver this.

- 3.13 **A charitable and social enterprise:** the movement towards a social economy and social enterprise are gaining more traction and proponents are working to construct the political, financial and legislative conditions to create an economy that is better for the majority and ultimately closing the inequalities gap. We are committed to supporting inclusive growth in the economy of the Scottish Borders. The challenge for us will be managing the distinct commercial and socially-focused approaches in a complementary and mutually reinforcing way.

4.0 Strategic context – future proofing

4.1 We continue to operate in a changing environment with challenges that we must consider and respond to in a creative and imaginative way. It is essential to navigate the changes and future proof the organisation.

4.2 **Austerity:** difficult economic conditions continue, as central government are pursuing an austerity agenda and there is a drive to deliver services differently. We need to operate within the context of an ever reducing management fee and drive to developing new and creative ways of delivering on our vision.

Uncertainty in relation to exit from the European Union is also likely to continue to have an impact, combined with rising inflation and static growth in income, leading to lower levels of disposable income from our home markets

4.3 **Community empowerment:** we will actively encourage greater engagement from the community in every aspect of our work and our ability to work in partnership will be essential in future years. Furthermore, there is an opportunity for us to build capacity in the community so that people can take responsibility for facilities that may be better operated by groups of people with shared interests.

4.4 **Demographic shifts:** we have an older community who are living and working longer and they are attracted to the benefits of a well-connected rural location outside of the city. Designing an offer that can truly grasp some of the bigger problems facing older people, in particular related to a healthier and happy lifestyle, could be a tour de force in our strategic plan if we are able to develop a proposition that responds to the future needs of this growing community.

4.5 **Sustainability:** this is not about business as usual but about the process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of our investments, the orientation of technological development and the institutional change we are required to deliver are in harmony with each other and enhance both the current position of the charity and the future potential to meet the vision. Most notable is the need to develop plural income streams with the emphasis on new markets, new business areas that work our assets more aggressively, and also the development of both discretionary and non-discretionary income strands.

4.6 **Technologically connected:** rapid growth in the use of new technology has created an ever-changing opportunity for choices and emerging competitors, easy access to a range of alternative cultural digital activity, sports opportunities and an expectation of exceptional facilities and service.

4.7 **Health and wellbeing inequalities:** growing inequalities and increased inter-dependence on health and social care services are a challenge. Access to our family of venues and services needs to be easy for everyone regardless of intellectual capacity, income, mobility or motivation.

5.0 Our strategic themes

- 5.1 Development and delivery of a new strategy must be seen within the context of a challenging and uncertain economic climate with continued financial pressure on those who receive public funding. Partnership working is crucial for the development of culture and sport moving forward and will have a much bigger role to play in supporting and empowering others to “do it for themselves”. Beyond the life of this plan, we will need to increasingly shift to becoming an enabling force and facilitating organisation with less direct delivery in some area of service provision. We have already developed meaningful relationships with the higher education sector, to deliver services to students, but we must now move to a deeper relationship where there are opportunities to generate transfer of knowledge between theoretical and practical spheres, building more effective public services and grounding academic disciplines in live experience settings.
- 5.2 The challenging scale of financial pressures in the public sector is going to require a recalibration of our thinking in relation to who, how and where we deliver our services. Implementing a geographic management model responsible for multi-disciplined service and teams, and optimising the use of generic management skills will be a key focus of the years ahead. And to help support staff to move from specialists to generalists, we would need to invest heavily in the development of a comprehensive leadership programme and competency framework.
- 5.3 Our basic approach needs to be realigned if we are not to see an acceleration in the reduction of facilities and services we provide. The future will require us to shift: from entitlement to community responsibility; from service provision to community enablement and education; from one size fits all to a range of diverse facilities, management models, service delivery options and sources of income. For the latter, the sources of income must come from plural funding streams including a stronger focus on earned income with greater emphasis on delivering a surplus. But this need to be articulated in a way that does not dilute the purpose of the charity and the value of our social impacts.
- 5.4 Our managerial approach needs to be imaginative and we must nurture an innovative, entrepreneurial team of managers and staff who understand the need to shift and grasp a nimble way of working. In particular, the benefits of developing an area model that can draw on the strength of all our skills, resources and expertise to support people with their goals. And, if anything, we may need to take more risks and explore partnerships that at first would appear divergent. Developing differently to other leisure trusts operating in Scotland could be a distinct advantage where new opportunities could open up a more expansive route for income generation.

5.5 Three strategic themes will form the foundations of the new vision and mission:

- **Participation:** encouraging everyone, regardless of age, ability or income, to participate in leisure activity that helps to make their life easier, happier, healthier and more rewarding. Our people will be focused on making positive change happen and will help people make every effort to achieve a specific goal.

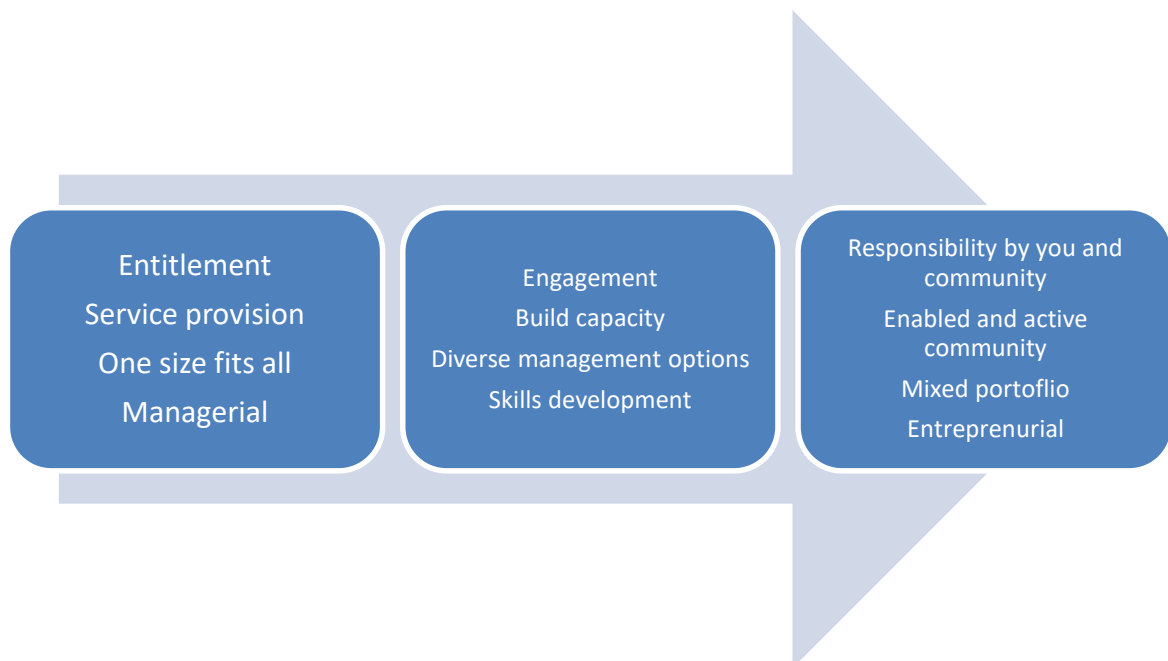
Our approach to participation will be inclusive. We will help everyone do more and move more, be it a gallery visit, going for a walk, cycling to work, walking up stairs, gaining confidence to use public transport, talking to someone for the first time or running their first 5K.

- **Experiences:** the breadth of what we offer has at its core opportunities to engage with people in a meaningful way. We can develop unique and rich experiences for our customers across an almost infinite choice of activities.
- **Collaboration:** delivering our vision with others. We are an organisation that is exuberant about working with others to find commonality; solve big problems; be more effective; do more with the resources we have; develop our people through the process of working with others and ultimately providing a better service for everyone. We will perfect our ability to work across the organisation to sell and develop our services, develop co-designed series and seek out new partnerships where we have a shared commitment and shared goals.

6.0 The shift

Delivering our strategic plan will need to be approached in stages and we will need to move through these phases with those we collaborate with and the communities we serve.

These shifts cannot be achieved alone, although, as leaders in sports and culture, we know our attitude, encouragement and enthusiasm for the shift will be critical to the success. But organisations that form the foundation of our relationships with the community, both in sports and culture, and in particular Scottish Borders Council, will also be required to support and communicate the recalibration of our approach and the expectations.

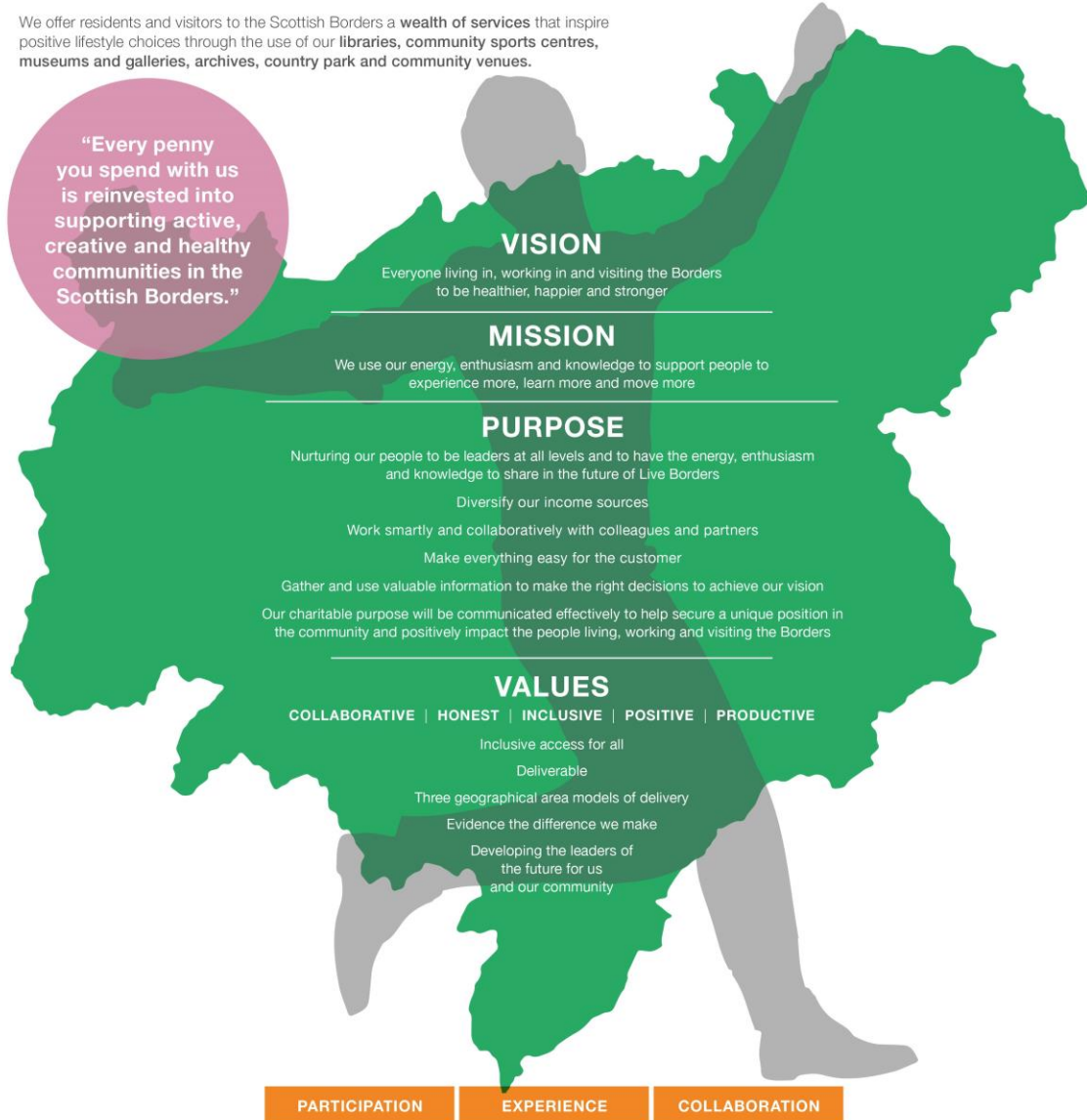


7. Strategic purpose – vision, mission, values and behaviour

OUR STRATEGIC VISION
2018 - 2023

We are the culture, sport and leisure charity trust for the Scottish Borders.
AT THE HEART OF LIVE BORDERS IS A COMMITMENT TO
MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES HEALTHIER, HAPPIER AND STRONGER.

We offer residents and visitors to the Scottish Borders a **wealth of services** that inspire positive lifestyle choices through the use of our **libraries, community sports centres, museums and galleries, archives, country park and community venues.**



- 1** Expand levels of participation/ access for all
- 2** Grow our earned income
- 3** Develop new funding streams
- 4** Build on our reputation for great customer service
- 5** Create a sustainable charity
- 6** Nurture our people to be proud of what they do

— **KEY PRIORITIES & ACTIONS** —

Health Development | Transformation | New Business Development | Property Planning

8. Strategic goals 2018 – 2023

We have six strategic goals to ensure we achieve our vision:

One - Expand levels of participation

Two - Grow our earned income

Three - Develop plural funding streams

Four - Build on our reputation for great customer service

Five - Create a sustainable charity

Six - Nurture our people to be proud of what they do

Each goal has a number of strategic indicators that will be used to monitor our achievements.

8.1 Goal One – expand levels of participation

In order to achieve this, we are going to:

- By 2018, scope the introduction of a universal membership card for new and existing users
- By 2018, scope an outcomes framework to measure out impacts on healthier, happier and stronger
- Develop our services in areas where there is significant need, in particular mental health
- Establish a dynamic ageing group to scope and develop new products for older people
- Improve our customer retention and track participants and make more effort to move people along pathways
- Scope and agree a methodology for research and development that brings new products to market
- Utilise the community engagement networks and other partnership groups eg Children’s and Young People’s Partnership to develop our co-design practice
- Agree our top 10 partners to deliver shared objectives
- Scope longitudinal study to evidence our impacts with key customer groups.

8.2 Goal Two – grow our earned income

In order to achieve this, we are going to:

- By 2018, have developed a commercial unit plan
- By 2018, have developed a marketing plan
- By 2018, scoped our development plan for Trifitness beyond 2020
- Delivered our events strategy through 2018/19 with a review in 2020
- Delivered our catering strategy through 2018/19 with a review in 2020
- Optimised our managed services operation to drive earned income

8.3 **Goal Three – develop new funding streams**

In order to achieve this, we are going to:

- By 2018, produced a funding plan
- Have a focused and consistent approach to non-charged activities to increase our donations income
- Develop our sponsorship offer to actively engage identified sponsors to generate additional income
- Develop service propositions that meet Health and Social Care needs to engage Live Borders in the H&SC commissioning process for physical activity and arts activities
- By 2018, be in a position to evaluate the benefits of bidding for NHS Borders commissions and if appropriate bid for these contracts.

8.4 **Goal Four – build on our reputation for great customer service**

In order to achieve this, we are going to:

- Complete our customer charter by Q1 2018
- Become a World Host recognised business with over 50% of our frontline staff World Host trained
- By Q4 2018, achieve a website usability score of 70/100 and continue to improve the score year on year
- By Q4, have reviewed our standards audit process and targets to ensure fit for purpose and can support us achieving this goal
- Actively influence Scottish Government/Local authority performance measures
- Continue with 3Cs customer feedback mechanism
- Gather and use customer data to continually improve on our performance.

8.5 **Goal Five – create a sustainable charity**

We will know and promote our charitable purpose and our role in delivering charitable benefits. Develop a baseline measure of customer knowledge of charitable status in 2018 and set a target to expand awareness 2019 and beyond.

In order to achieve this, we are going to:

- By Q1 2018, have developed out elevator pitch for all levels of engagement internally and externally
- Communicate our charitable purpose across all layers of the organisation
- Continue to build on our portfolio of case studies and promote effectively to partners and funders
- During the life of the plan reduce our staff costs by increasing earned income, digitalisation and improvements in productivity
- During the life of the plan improve the use of energy in all our facilities
- Identify and develop those services that can only be achieved by a charity

8.6 **Goal Six – nurture our people to be proud of what they do**

We are going to help our staff be healthier, happier, stronger and empower them to be the best they can possibly be.

In order to achieve this, we are going to:

- By Q1 2018, communicate and embed our purpose, vision and values with staff and partners through our attitude, behaviours and words
- By Q2 2018, conduct a staff survey to have baseline data relating to our core vision of healthier, happier and stronger people
- By 2018, our induction process will be reviewed and implemented
- By 2018, we will have scoped the introduction of a recognition award
- By 2019, achieve the Healthy Working Lives Award or equivalent recognition award
- All staff provided with annual goals and expectations
- All staff actively contribute to annual unit plans
- Through 2018, continue to encourage the staff association to be an active part of the communication process
- Continue to implement a programme of modern apprenticeships for young people
- Introduce an appraisal system for all staff
- By 2019, introduce a leadership programme
- By 2019, we will have scoped the implementation of a competency framework
- By 2019, our retiral process will have been reviewed and implemented

9. **Strategic indicators – KSIs**

During the lifetime of our plan we need to ensure we are delivering our goals using the key strategic indicators noted in appendix 1. Progress against these measures will be reviewed monthly by the management team and quarterly by the board.

Goal one – Expand levels of participation

- KSI 1 Total number of participants split into sport and culture
- KSI 2 – 6 Memberships and health referrals
- KSI 7 Total number of participants engaged in more than one leisure activity

Goal two – Grow our earned income

- KSI 8 Earned income as a percentage of total turnover
- KSI 9 Staff costs as a percentage of total income (less management fee)

Goal three – Develop plural funding streams

- KSI 10 Funding income achieved and as a percentage of total turnover
- KSI 11 Donations income achieved and as a percentage of turnover
- KSI 12 Percentage success rate for external funding applications

Goal four – Build on our reputation for great customer service

- KSI 13 Net Promoter Score
- KSI 14 Staff trained in World Host
- KSI 15 Percentage of active members retained each year

Goal five – Create a sustainable charity

- KSI 16 Communicating our charitable objectives

Goal six – Nurture our people to be proud of what they do

- KSI 17 Staff participation in leisure activity
- KSI 18 Staff absence
- KSI 19 Staff retention
- KSI 20 Volunteer numbers

Financial

- KSI 21 Energy consumption by square metre
- KSI 22 Surplus/deficit (service provision agreement)
- KSI 23 Cost per attendance – sport
- KSI 24 Cost per attendance – library
- KSI 25 Cost per attendance – museum

10. Delivery

This strategy has been informed by the views individuals and organisations collated through group work and many conversations. May we thank everyone for their contribution. We will deliver this strategy through the following:

- Annual unit plans for services
- Individual key results for staff linked to the strategy
- Independent research and consultation with customers, partners and collaborators.
- Regular directorate meetings, thematic groups, joint planning with partners, customer panel (users/non users), and our 3 Cs (comments, complaints and compliments).

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