

23.07.04

17 Deputy C.S. Alves of the Minister for Infrastructure regarding Active Card membership (OQ.140/2023)

Will the Minister advise how many Active Card members have cancelled or not renewed their membership since the beginning of this year, giving a month-by-month breakdown?

Deputy T. Binet of St. Saviour (The Minister for Infrastructure):

I wonder this might be passed over to the Deputy Stephenson, who is the Assistant Minister with responsibility for both sport and sporting facilities.

Deputy L. Stephenson of St. Mary, St. Ouen and St. Peter (Assistant Minister for Infrastructure - rapporteur):

The total number of Active members in June was 4,355 and the net reduction for the first half of the year is 205. The Active membership, like all gym memberships, experiences a natural churn and fluctuates throughout the year, and this is more so in the summer months when members decide to exercise outside. The numbers for 2023 are within the usual range of fluctuation and by month are as follows: January 147, February 132, March 102, April 125, May 171, June 258. Cancellations in May and June this year have increased slightly following the change from Fort Regent to Springfield, and we are closely monitoring this. I would also point out that those figures obviously do not take into account new sales. As an example, in June there were 241 new sales, so only a net reduction of 17 in that month. Overall the Active membership figure is higher than in 2021 and 2022 and remains strong and the facilities are well used by the public. I would be very happy to circulate more detailed figures to States Members.

3.17.1 Deputy C.S. Alves:

Is the Minister able to comment, she mentioned there that the change that happened with the Fort Regent and Springfield may have contributed to some of this? Is any data collected around the reasons why people cancel or do not renew their membership?

Deputy L. Stephenson:

I do not believe so and it is also at the moment not possible to break down where those members were specifically using their membership. Some would maybe be using Les Quennevais, some Springfield, Fort Regent; we do not have that level of data yet. I can certainly feed that back to the team though for future.

3.17.2 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Does the Minister have a point in mind whereby there would be concerns over changes to Active Card membership and the move to Springfield? It seems that if it is not being tracked where people are I am not entirely sure how that will be measured as to the success or not of that move.

Deputy L. Stephenson:

As with any major move of facilities it was always expected that there would be an impact. There were those who did freeze memberships in the immediate run-up to it and may have since cancelled them. There are also new members. We have seen a huge increase on social media interest around Springfield as well. It is a very difficult thing to quantify on both sides of the coin why people may decide to join and why people may decide to leave as well. What I would say at this stage is neither I nor the officers have any cause for concern about the offering at Active. It remains strong, it remains

well used. Officers continue to monitor and engage with those providing feedback about the new facility at Springfield and will continue to do so.

3.17.3 Deputy R.J. Ward:

I almost wonder whether the Assistant Minister can confirm how long term that will be monitored because, as was mentioned, it is difficult. Yes, of course it is difficult but we do need to understand whether or not that move has been a success and had a significant effect on the use in that area. Anecdotally, we are being told by local constituency Deputies who have a drop-in there, that there has been a drop in the use of the facility. I just wonder how the Minister is going to track that.

Deputy L. Stephenson:

There are monthly reports that are supplied by officers on usage and reporting to the various K.P.I.s (key performance indicators) that link into the Active portfolio, and myself and the Minister for Infrastructure do receive those regularly, as well as the officers in the reporting line. There are processes in place which enable that to happen. I think going forward some of the usage data is going to be more accurate because Springfield gym provides a much more accurate system for checking in and checking out, which previously did not exist at Fort Regent. It will be possible to have greater data around that as we go forward. As I say, we will continue to monitor that situation and there are individuals very well-qualified in running gyms, which I admit I am not, who are paying close attention to this move and it is certainly not being ignored.

3.17.4 Deputy M. Tadier:

We know that there has been a net decrease in memberships for Active, and I am slightly concerned that the Assistant Minister says that they are confident there is not a systemic problem but they do not have the information as to why people are leaving. Would she take, I think, Deputy Alves up on her underlying suggestion in the question is that the department should be asking when people cancel or do not renew their membership, exactly why they are doing that?

[12:00]

Similarly, when they do join as to why they are joining. Does she accept it is quite standard procedure for companies and service providers when you go to cancel a subscription, whatever it is for, to have a tick box asking why it is you are cancelling? Would she seek to reflect that back to Active as a constructive suggestion?

Deputy L. Stephenson:

I think, as I did say in my first answer, absolutely I will feed that back to the team. There may well be something in place that does ask the question that I am just not aware of today, but I will find out and feed it back. Yes, I agree it is something that is useful. I would also say that there is perhaps sometimes as well more than one reason which play into it. A tick box does not always provide the full data but speaking to people on the ground and having real-life conversations is also a valuable way of gaining an insight.