

REPORT TO CABINET

21 March 2018

Subject:	Extension of Free Swimming programme to 2018/19 and 2019/20
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Councillor Paul Moore - Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Investment
Director:	Director - Housing and Communities - Alan Caddick
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	 
Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan (28 day notice) Reference:	SMBC11/03/2018
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Councillor Paul Moore – 28/02/2018
Director Approval:	28/02/2018
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply.
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	Ward councillors have not been consulted
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny have not been consulted
Contact Officer(s):	Gemma Ryan – Business Manager – Sport & Leisure gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Communities to enter into an agreement with Sandwell Leisure Trust and Places for People Leisure to offer free swimming to :-
 - Children and young people aged 16 years and under (exclusively Sandwell residents only) during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week, throughout school holidays only;
 - Adults aged 60 years and over (exclusively Sandwell residents only) during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week before 1pm all year round.

for the financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20.

2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources to allocate a revenue budget of £234,360 for 2018/19 and £252,633 for 2019/20.
3. That any necessary exemptions be made to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to enable the course of action referred to in recommendation 1 (above) to proceed.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the continuation of the Free Swimming Initiative in Sandwell. The initial scheme was approved by the cabinet on 12th June 2013 (see Minute No. 35/13), again at the meeting of Cabinet of 4 March 2015 (Minute No. 51/15), for the financial year 2015/16 and further for financial year 2016/17 at the meeting of Cabinet of 22nd March 2017 (Minute No. 64/17).

2 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S VISION

- 2.1 The Free Swimming Initiative in Sandwell will help improve our sport and active leisure offer in the borough by providing wider access to sport and physical activity opportunities, which will directly support the Vision 2030 ambition for Sandwell's communities to live healthy lives.
- 2.2 The Free Swimming Initiative will increase usage of our leisure facilities which will support ambition 8 in creating centres of community life, leisure and entertainment.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The scheme allows adults, who are Sandwell residents, aged 60 and over to swim without charge during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week before 1pm, all year round.
- 3.2 The Free Swimming in Sandwell initiative also allows for children and young people, who are Sandwell residents, aged 16 years and under to swim without charge during public swimming sessions, for seven days per week, throughout school holiday periods only.
- 3.3 This initiative has been available to Sandwell residents at the following leisure facilities:
- Haden Hill Leisure Centre
 - Langley Swimming Centre
 - Smethwick Swimming Centre
 - Tipton Leisure Centre
 - Wednesbury Leisure Centre
 - West Bromwich Leisure Centre
- 3.4 The performance of sport and leisure is monitored nationally by the Active People Survey. This survey details the number of people in a borough who participate in 1 x 30 minutes of physical activity or sport per week. The delivery of the Free Swimming in Sandwell initiative will have been a contributing factor to the 5.6% increase in the Active People Survey for Sandwell residents achieved since its launch, an increase which makes Sandwell one of only sixteen boroughs in England to achieve a statistically significant increase in participation rates. This increase calculates to an additional circa 16,300 residents 16 and over participating in physical activity and sport in Sandwell for 1 x 30 minutes per week.
- 3.5 However, although there has been a significant positive impact on the number of residents participating in 30 minutes of physical activity or sport, levels of inactivity are still high in borough with Sport England's Active Lives Survey, the performance measure that will replace the Active People Survey from 2017 onwards, highlights that 28.7% (71,500 people) of Sandwell residents are classed as inactive.
- 3.6 Participating in 30 minutes of physical activity or sport per week provides residents with significant health benefits. Being physically active reduces the likelihood of having a stroke, reduces blood pressure, reduces the likelihood of suffering from a blood clot, improves cholesterol levels, and promotes mental health & well-being.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Since the Free Swimming in Sandwell initiative was launched in June 2013, 7,693 adults and 28,145 children and young people who meet the criteria have become a member of the scheme. Since April 2015, when the scheme was extended for a further two years by Cabinet, until the end of December 2017, there have been 89,387 swims by residents aged 16 and under (56,884 at Sandwell Leisure Trust five sites and 32,503 at Places for People's one site) and 157,839 swims by residents aged 60 and over (85,571 at Sandwell Leisure Trust five sites and 72,268 at Places for People's one site).
- 4.2 Both leisure providers have reported a positive correlation between increased usage of young people and older people at the same time, i.e. young people are often accompanied by parents, grandparents or older carers. Suggesting that Free Swimming for young people encourages family visits and family interaction.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.1 A survey was carried out in August 2017 to assess the impact and value of the Free Swimming to those that have used the programme, including 67 over 60 respondents and 183 under 16 respondents. Some of the key findings are outlined below.
- 5.2 Over half (55%) of over 60's surveyed stated that they do not swim at all when Free Swimming is not available. The majority of over 60's surveyed swim once a week (22%) or twice or more a week (68%) when Free Swimming is available.
- 5.3 Over half of under 16's surveyed (53%) swim less often when Free Swimming is not available, i.e. less than once a month or not at all. Conversely, 72% swim at least once a week when Free Swimming is available.
- 5.4 The most popular reasons for swimming, reported by over 60's respondents, were related to improving or maintaining health and fitness and mental health or well-being.
- 5.5 The most popular reasons for swimming, reported by under 16's, were related to social interaction or improving swimming ability and water confidence.
- 5.6 More than 60% of over 60's take part in 30 minutes of sport and physical activity three, four or five times per week with swimming counting for at least one of these. This demonstrates a direct contribution of the Free Swimming programme to Sandwell's Sport England Active Lives targets.

- 5.7 Non-users of the programme were asked why they did not take up the Free Swimming opportunity, 80% of respondents stated that it was because they did not know about the programme.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The scheme could be dis-continued. However, if the Council does not continue the free swimming programme this would have an adverse impact on the opportunities available to residents participate in physical activity to some of our most vulnerable residents.
- 6.2 Invest the money into other sport and physical activity programmes. However, swimming has the ability to engage and provide health benefits on a wider scale than many other activities, as demonstrated by the consultation exercise, and is an essential life skill.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 If the proposals within this report are approved this would result in a total maximum resource implication of £234,360 (dependent upon SLT attendance figures) for 2018/19 and £252,633 for 2019/20.
- 7.2 The charges for swimming for 2018/19 are as follows;

	Adult Swim Fee	Child Swim Fee
2018/19	£4.20	£2.40

- 7.3 Both leisure providers have subsequently submitted a proposal for the funding required to continue the Free Swimming initiative in their centres. The tables below provide detail and context to these proposals.

SLT	Attendances			Cost			SMBC	Cost to SLT
	60+	U16	Total	60+	U16	Total		
2016/17	35,096	21,810	56,906	£ 70,192	£ 50,163	£ 120,335	£ 109,000	£ 11,355
2017/18*	37,368	23,518	60,886	£ 76,604	£ 55,267	£ 131,872	£ 122,153	£ 9,719
2018/19**	39,984	25,164	65,148	£ 83,966	£ 60,394	£ 144,360	£ 144,360	£ -
2019/20**	42,783	26,926	69,708	£ 92,111	£ 66,022	£ 158,133	£ 158,133	£ -

PfP	Attendances			Cost			SMBC	Cost to PfP
	60+	U16	Total	60+	U16	Total		
2016/17	27,977	4,742	32,719	£ 102,629	£ 10,906	£ 113,535	£ 75,000	£ 38,535
2017/18*	29,120	4,992	34,112	£ 106,882	£ 11,731	£ 118,553	£ 75,000	£ 43,553
2018/19**	30,000	5,000	35,000	£ 113,400	£ 12,000	£ 125,400	£ 85,000	£ 40,000
2019/20**	30,500	5,000	35,500	£ 118,750	£ 12,360	£ 131,110	£ 89,500	£ 41,600

- 7.4 SLT have applied a 7% increase to form the proposed attendances and subsequent expected costs for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The rationale for this approach is that this is consistent with attendance increases for previous years. They are seeking a full cost recovery model due to the costs incurred to them, beyond the funding provided, in previous years (circa £10,000 per annum). They wish to agree a funding cap based upon the expected costs of the programme for 2018/19 and 2019/20 but will only claim for actual attendances.
- 7.5 PfP are requesting an increased funding cap of £85,000 (an increase of £10,000 on previous years) to address the increasing annual costs of the programme. They have supplemented the scheme by circa £40,000 per annum previously and are seeking to maintain this level of contribution for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
- 7.6 There is a budget of £5,000 identified to re-launch the scheme to maximise its potential, to have the widest reach to Sandwell Residents and to build upon the initiatives success to date.
- 7.7 The cost of the project will be funded from the following sources;

	2018/19	2019/20
Public Health service budgets	£202,200	£202,200
Housing and Communities reallocation of budgets	£32,160	£50,433
TOTAL	£234,360	£252,633

7.8 Summary of Costs

	2018/19	2019/20
Sandwell Leisure Trust	£144,360	£158,133
Places for People Leisure	£85,000	£89,500
Re-launch (marketing)	£5,000	£5,000
TOTAL	£234,360	£252,633

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Sandwell Leisure Trust and Places for People Leisure are contracted by Sandwell Council to operate leisure facilities in Sandwell. For the Free Swimming in Sandwell scheme to be delivered this can only be achieved through the use of these contractors. Therefore, an exemption from the Council's Contract Procurement Rules is required to deliver this scheme.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been completed and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 All information held for this work has been subject to the Council's Data Protection policy.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT.

- 11.1 This programme supports the wider agenda of providing diversionary activities for young people during school holidays. Providing positive activities for young people is an integral part of reducing crime and anti social behaviour during school holidays where police see an increase in these.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 This is funded from existing council budgets. As this is a subsidised service, however, there will always be a requirement to subsidise it if this is a service the Council wishes to continue.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 Participating in physical activity has significant health benefits, including reducing risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, many cancers, mental health and general well being.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

- 14.1 There will be no impact on council managed property or land.

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 Due to the impact of this programme to date, highlighted by the consultation exercise and the increasing engagement annually in the programme it is recommended that the proposal to extend the Free Swimming programme be extended for delivery from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2020 is approved by Cabinet. There would be an impact upon the access to physical activity opportunities for the target groups for this programme should it not be continued. This could affect the health and well being of both demographic groups, in particular the over 60's. It would also impact the provision of diversionary activities for young people should the programme not be continued.

16 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 None

17 APPENDICES:

None

Alan Caddick
Director – Housing and Communities