
SWIMMING – WITHDRAWAL OF GRANT FROM GOVERNMENT

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Steve Harker, Health and Leisure Portfolio

Responsible Director - Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Cabinet of the cessation of the Government Grant for free swimming.

Summary

2. The Government has reviewed the resource funding for the free swimming programme for young people under 16 and the over 60's and has decided to cease the funding from 31 July 2010.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) A new charge for swimming for the over 60's be introduced from 1 August 2010.
 - (b) Charges from 1 August 2010 be at the level of an adult swim, the current charge for which is detailed in **Appendix 1** along with details of the concession available from the LIVE Darlington card.

Reasons

4. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:
 - (a) To ensure there is no unbudgeted financial impact on the Council's MTFP.
 - (b) To bring swimming for the over 60's in line with the charges for adults.

Cliff Brown
Director of Community Services

Background Papers

E Mail from Director, Sport and leisure, Department of Culture

Mike Crawshaw : Extension 2431

S17 Crime and Disorder	This will not impact on crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	The reduction in funding will most likely reduce the amount of swimming by the over 60's
Sustainability	Charging will not impact on sustainability
Diversity	The programme was targeted at groups that may be termed hard to reach and withdrawal of funding could impact on progress.
Wards Affected	This will affect all wards
Groups Affected	Over 60s
Budget and Policy Framework	The proposal falls within the MTFP
Key Decision	This is a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The scheme related to the Healthy Darlington theme.
Efficiencies	This report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme

MAIN REPORT

Free Swimming Grant

5. On 2 December 2008 the Cabinet agreed to accept the offer from the previous Government to fund the provision of free swimming for the over 60's. The offer for free swimming for the under 16's was declined.
6. The Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport has now announced that the resource funding for free swimming programme will cease on 31 July 2010 following a review of funding commitments.

Impact on the Council

7. The grant allocation to the Council for free swimming for over 60s in 2009/10 and 2010/11 was £31,021. This offer met the projected income from casual swimming at the Dolphin Centre for over 60s. While the offer has certainly increased the number of swimming visits from over 60's it is expected that with the cessation of free swimming levels will fall to that previously experienced.
8. Cabinet do have the option of continuing with free swimming for the over 60's but this will have an impact on the MTFP that has not been budgeted for, estimated to be in the order of the grant that was being received. In the current uncertain financial climate with other budget reductions to consider, providing a new charge for the over 60's is introduced from 1 August 2010; there should be no adverse financial impact on the Council.
9. Members should note that the charge proposed is the price for an adult swim at £3.10 but as all those over 60 are eligible to apply for a LIVE Darlington concession card, the charge would be at a lower level of £2.35 per swim for cardholders.
10. The offer for the under 16's was not taken up so there will be no impact from the withdrawal of funding.

Outcome of Consultation

11. There has been no consultation on the withdrawal of funding.

2010/11 Swimming Charges

Adult Swim £3.10

LiveDarlington Swim £2.35

Senior Citizens residing in Darlington and over the age of 60 are all eligible for the LiveDarlington Concessionary Scheme.

The LiveDarlington Card can be obtained at the Dolphin Centre with a confirmation letter from the Benefits Agency, Entitlement Book or Birth Certificate.