

**20 June 2016****Agenda Item: 06**

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE**

### **UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE SCHOOLS SWIMMING SERVICE OFFER**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the review of the Council's offer of Schools Swimming, following approval at Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015. This report also seeks approval to further investigate options as to how Nottinghamshire schools can be supported to deliver swimming from September 2017. It is proposed that a further report with final recommendations be brought to the Committee for approval during Autumn 2016.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. The Council currently provides an offer of Schools Swimming services to schools in Nottinghamshire. This is delivered by the Schools Swimming Service which is funded through income from schools and a current subsidy of £53,000 p.a. from the Council. The total turnover of the service is circa £1.3million per annum.
3. The financial sustainability of the Schools Swimming Service is dependent on several factors outside of the Council's control. These include the number of schools who choose to purchase the service each year, the availability and cost of hiring pools and the cost and availability of transport for pupils to access them.
4. In recent years, despite the best efforts of the Service to work within its small revenue budget, there has been overspend due to unplanned pool closures and escalating transport costs.
5. There is a developing market of alternative suppliers of school swimming and several Nottinghamshire schools are choosing to take their business elsewhere.
6. Due to recent legal precedence there is a clear duty for the Council to offer swimming related advice to schools in respect of safeguarding and safe school swimming practice.

#### **Outcome of the Review**

7. An online survey was facilitated as part of the review process to gather feedback from schools. More than 50% of schools currently purchasing the Service from the Council responded. Their responses were as follows:
  - 90% were satisfied or very satisfied with the current service

- 3% had been approached by another provider
- those approached by an alternative provider had decided to continue to purchase from the Council due to a combination of value for money and the quality of service, including safeguarding and safety
- 10% may not continue to purchase from the Council if the charges rose by 10%. This figure was used as a prompt in the survey as it is the increase that would be needed if the service was to become cost neutral to the Council.

8. The review also included:

- consultation with the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), to gain a national perspective on the delivery and governance of Schools Swimming
- consultation with Nottingham City's Solar Sport Outdoor Learning, Life Skills, Adventure and Risk Management service, an alternative provider of Schools Swimming and which has attracted contracts from a small number of County schools around the City boundaries
- contact with Sport Nottinghamshire, which already works in partnership with the Council to provide sporting opportunities across Nottinghamshire. In other areas of the country similar sports partnerships have become third sector providers of schools swimming
- clarity on the responsibilities of the Council with regard to its offer of swimming related advice to schools, safeguarding and safety (Annie Woodland v Essex County Council case)
- consultation with all relevant stakeholders including staff.

9. Following the review three initial options have been produced for the delivery of swimming support to Nottinghamshire schools from September 2017. When these have been fully explored a further report with a recommended option will be brought to the Committee for approval.

- a) transition from an in-house traded schools swimming service model to one that enables schools to directly purchase swimming programmes directly from an external provider. In this model the Council would continue to offer swimming advice to schools. This would be achieved through the Outdoor Education Advisor's office based within the Outdoor and Environmental Education Service. This option would reduce the cost to the Council by an estimated £40,000 per annum from September 2017.
- b) transition from an in-house traded schools swimming service model to one where the staffing and existing agreements with schools would transfer to a third sector provider. In this model the Council would continue to offer swimming advice to schools as set out in the option above. Again, this option would reduce the cost to the Council by an estimated £40,000 per annum from September 2017.

- c) the Council continuing as a provider of school swimming with an increase in charges so that full costs are recovered. This would involve approval of an increase in charges implemented in two tranches (5% in September 2016 and 5% in September 2017). In this model the Council would continue to offer swimming advice to schools as set out above. This option would reduce the cost to the Council by £53,000 per annum from September 2017.

### **Staffing Restructure**

10. Prior to any changes to the model of delivery it is necessary to revise the current staffing structure to ensure that the service can be provided without the high risk of overspend. A staffing report will be brought to Committee in July 2016.

### **Other Options Considered**

11. None.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

12. To support the completion of the review of school swimming provision.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

14. These are set out in **paragraph 9**.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That the Committee:

- 1) notes the update on the review of the Schools Swimming Service
- 2) approves further exploration of the impact of the options proposed in **paragraph 9**, with final recommendations to be received by Committee during Autumn 2016.

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**Constitutional Comments (LM 26/05/16)**

15. The recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of Reference of the Children and Young People's Committee.

**Financial Comments (SS 03/06/16)**

16. The financial implications of the report are contained within paragraph 14 above.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Review of the Schools Swimming Service offer – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 14 December 2015.

Schools Swimming Service offer.

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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