

Education, Children & Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 3 March 2020

Community access to schools – update report

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 approve the transfer of management of secondary school non-sport lets and primary school lets to Edinburgh Leisure in principal.
 - 1.1.2 delegate responsibility to officers to negotiate detail of transfer including transfer dates with Edinburgh Leisure.

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Community access to schools - update report

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on consultation carried out about the transfer of further areas of community access responsibility to Edinburgh Leisure. Recommendations have been detailed to progress the transfer.

3. Background

- 3.1 Members will recall a report on community access tabled at this committee's meeting on 16 August 2019.
- 3.2 The report detailed measures taken to reduce the budget pressure on the community access project and further areas to improve the department's financial position and the quality of community access provision.
- 3.3 These areas included transfer of non-sport use of secondary schools and primary school lets.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Engagement with head teachers of primary, secondary and special schools has taken place over the last couple of months to explore issues around community access to schools and further transfer of responsibility to Edinburgh Leisure.
- 4.2 Officers have presented at the Head Teachers Executive Forum and convened a risk workshop with head teachers.
- 4.3 Secondary Head Teachers, through their Executive Forum, were asked to consider two routes for the progression of non-sport community access to their schools. The first option was for each secondary school to retain the responsibility for managing these lets but to take a share of the budget pressure being absorbed by the department. An income target would be set as a share of the pressure and if exceeded, the school would retain this amount. Conversely, if the target was not met the school's budget would have to absorb the difference between this amount and the actual income received.

- 4.4 The second option is for non-sport secondary school lets to be transferred to Edinburgh Leisure and the schools would no longer retain responsibility for community access.
- 4.5 The response received from the Chair of the Secondary Headteachers Forum confirmed that there was no appetite for a target-based approach to schools managing non-sport lets and that the collective view of all 23 secondary head teachers was that they did not want to take this option forward.
- 4.6 From the diligence carried out on non-sport use of secondary schools, there are only a small number of schools that have a high level of use at evenings and weekends and most of this use is through the adult education programme. There are at least 9 secondary schools that do not have any form of non-sport community access and 3 schools only have non-sport access at weekends.
- 4.7 Improved customer service through a designated one-stop shop for community access to secondary schools and co-ordinated marketing should result in increased community use of school spaces within a controlled environment. This change will make significant contributions to alleviating the budget pressure.
- 4.8 A risk workshop took place in December 2019 with head teachers from a selection of primary, secondary and special schools. Concerns and issues raised included intruder threats to the building, information security, damage to classrooms and equipment, and health & safety within car parks. A risk register has been drafted following the workshop, detailing control measures and further actions to reduce and mitigate these risks.
- 4.9 Primary school lets are currently managed centrally by Business Support administrators. As previously reported, there is no co-ordination between primary and secondary school lets. Opportunities, therefore, to make the most efficient use of our education estate are not currently being taken.
- 4.10 The lets within primary schools that were within a ten-minute walking distance of a secondary school were reviewed to examine the potential opportunities for the access to be relocated. The review showed that 17 out of 28 lets taking place in primary schools could be accommodated within their closest secondary school. If these lets were to be moved, this would result in a direct reduction of FM re-charges to the Communities and Families Department for opening the primary schools outside of core hours. There would be no additional cost for the lets taking place within secondary schools as they have core hours at evenings and weekends. This change would therefore contribute towards an efficient use of the estate and mitigation of the project budget pressure.
- 4.11 Business Support have been engaged and consulted about the transfer of primary school lets to Edinburgh Leisure and understand the rationale behind this proposal. There would be no requirement to TUPE transfer Council staff to Edinburgh Leisure and administrators would be re-assigned to alternative roles within the Council.
- 4.12 The Council's Adult Education Programme uses both primary and secondary schools as venues for its classes. The AEP currently liaises with school Business

Managers about access and arrangements. Given that the AEP is a Council organised programme as opposed to a let, the current access process would remain in place. The AEP would also continue to receive priority access to non-sport spaces in schools during community time.

- 4.13 Progress has also been made with the transfer of the community access to sport facilities at WHEC and Leith Academy. An engagement event took place with members of staff in December 2019 and a target date for transfer has been set for 1st April 2020.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If approved by committee, Edinburgh Leisure will require approval from their Board of Directors for the transfer of additional community access functions to their organisation.
- 5.2 Officers from the Council and Edinburgh Leisure will develop a plan and timeline for the transfer of management of non-sport lets at secondary schools and primary school lets.
- 5.3 The estimated date for transfer of both functions is 1st August 2020.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 As detailed in the report to this committee in August 2019, this project has a £0.8M budget pressure. Measure have been taken to reduce this pressure and the recommendations detailed in this report should further reduce the pressure.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Headteachers from primary, secondary and special schools have been consulted and engaged on the proposed changes to community access.
- 7.2 Opening hours for core times and the pricing structure will remain the same as present.
- 7.3 Customers and communities will benefit from centralised service for all sport and non-sport access to primary, secondary and special schools.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Report 4 October 2016
- 8.2 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Report 14 June 2016
- 8.3 Education, Children, and Families Committee Report 24 May 2016

- 8.4 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Report 17 May 2016
- 8.5 Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee Report 29 September 2015
- 8.6 Culture and Sport Committee Report 11 March 2014
- 8.7 Education, Children, and Families Committee Report 15 August 2017
- 8.8 Education, Children & Families Committee Report 11 December 2018
- 8.9 Education, Children & Families Committee Report 16 August 2019

9. Appendices

None