

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Friday, 16 August 2019

Transfer of management of secondary school sport facilities to Edinburgh Leisure

Item number
Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 To note the options developed and measures taken to reduce the budget pressure for this project.
 - 1.1.2 To approve the introduction of an additional charge for lets outside of the new opening hour framework as detailed in paragraph 4.3.

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2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Members will recall the report tabled at Committee on 11 December 2018 detailing the impact of the introduction of non-core hour charges and the subsequent approved motion requesting officers to develop a strategy in partnership with clubs that supports the inclusion agenda and enables access to Council facilities without additional charges being imposed.
- 2.2 This report provides an update on the work to date on the strategy to enable access without additional charges and delivering a service within the available budget.

3. Background

- 3.1 The transfer of management of secondary school sport facilities to Edinburgh Leisure was approved by Corporate Policy & Strategy Committee in June 2016. The first schools to transfer were James Gillespie's High School and Portobello High School in October 2016 and since then all schools apart from Leith Academy and WHEC have transferred to Edinburgh Leisure.
- 3.2 The report to Committee on 11 December 2018 detailed the budget pressures faced with the project and the rationale behind the non-core hour charge. Today's report details the proposals developed by officers from the Council and Edinburgh Leisure to mitigate the budget pressure without adding any additional costs to clubs and customers using secondary school facilities.

4. Main report

- 4.1 The report details below the options developed to date to mitigate the budget pressure and enable access without additional charges being imposed.

4.1.1 Increase use of secondary school sport facilities

Since the decision was made to withdraw the introduction of the non-core hour charge, Edinburgh Leisure have developed a revised opening hours schedule that

accommodates all existing users within a core hour framework. The revised opening hour schedule reduces the number of additional hours required, contributing to the reduction in budget pressure.

With space utilisation at just over 50% Edinburgh Leisure are marketing the available facilities and by keeping all additional use within the opening hours schedule the increase in income will directly reduce the budget pressure as no extra costs will be incurred.

4.1.2 Price harmonisation

Year 2 of a 3-year harmonisation process was approved by Council at its Budget meeting in February this year. Prices for all sport spaces (other than 3G pitches) should be harmonised with Edinburgh Leisure by year 3. The model adopted for price harmonisation (concession lets are 50% of standard price and commercial lets are 125% of standard price) has resulted, for the second year running, in no increase for most concession lets with prices for 19/20 remaining at 17/18 prices.

4.1.3 Management of sport space – Monday to Friday 4pm to 6pm and 9am to 12pm Saturday – term time

Access to secondary school sport facilities during the above slots is currently reserved for school sport although clubs are allowed access at the discretion of each school. Protection for school use would remain but transferring the management of clubs lets for this period to Edinburgh Leisure would improve ease of access to unused spaces for customers. As with 4.1.1, costs are already covered therefore additional income would directly reduce the budget pressure.

4.1.4 Management of non-sport lets

Non-sport lets are currently managed by each individual secondary school with no strategic co-ordination or management in place. Transferring the management of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure would ensure the efficient use of all secondary school facilities whilst marketing of all available spaces across the secondary school estate would increase use and income.

Diligence on current use indicates that there is a high level of spare capacity for non-sport use of the secondary school estate.

4.1.5 Primary school lets

As with sport and non-sport lets at secondary schools, there is currently no co-ordination between primary school and secondary school lets. Transferring the management of primary school lets to Edinburgh Leisure would result in one agency managing all community access to the Council's school estate; making the most efficient use of school facilities.

4.1.6 Additional PPP 1 core hours

As part of the settlement with the Edinburgh Schools Partnership, additional core hours have been allocated for evenings and weekends. This will allow additional use and income at the 5 PPP 1 secondary schools.

4.1.7 Transfer of Wester Hailes Education Centre to Edinburgh Leisure

The leisure operation at WHEC is subsidised by the Council and transferring to Edinburgh Leisure would allow the sharing of their best practice from managing the Council's sport & leisure estate. Further promotion of the leisure operation at WHEC through EL's marketing network would have a positive effect on the subsidy and make a valuable contribution towards the community access budget pressure.

Conversations are continuing between Council and Edinburgh Leisure officials on the transfer of WHEC to Edinburgh Leisure.

- 4.2 All of the options above are either being implemented, or plans are developing to implement. Given the change of brief and remit for Edinburgh Leisure contained within options 4.1.4 and 4.1.5 further consultation and engagement is required. Edinburgh Leisure also require approval from their board before they could consider transferring these functions to their current operation.
- 4.3 The option detailed in 4.1.1 refers to the revised opening hours framework for access to secondary school sport facilities and the fact that all existing users have been accommodated within this. There is also significant capacity within these hours for new customers. Any request for access out with the opening hour framework will result in additional costs to the Council and it is unlikely that the income from these lets will cover the costs. Allowing lets outside of the opening hour framework would likely increase the budget pressure. Given that this would only be for new let requests, who would be encouraged to take a let within the opening hour framework, there could be an instance where the customer only wants access out with the framework. For such cases it would be appropriate to include an additional charge as part of the fee to ensure that the Council is not further subsidising this access.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Officers will work with colleagues from Edinburgh Leisure to complete the consultation and engagement for options 4.1.4 and 4.1.5.
- 5.2 A report for decision on the above options will be presented to this committee in 1 cycle.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 As detailed in the report to this committee in December 2018, this project has a £1M budget pressure. The above options are required to reduce this pressure whilst supporting the inclusion agenda and ensuring that no additional charges are placed on clubs to access school facilities within the new opening hour framework.
- 6.2 Through the implementation of measures to date, the budget pressure has reduced to £0.8M. Implementation of these measures across the full financial year along with the development of further measures detailed in this report should further reduce the pressure.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Engagement has taken place with Council departments as well as Active Schools and Sport Development Officers.
- 7.2 All existing customers have been informed of new operation hours and pricing structure for secondary school sport lets. Meetings have taken place with governing bodies, clubs and Club Sport Edinburgh to discuss changes to community access and resolve problems and concerns.

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

9. Appendices

None