

# Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 5 September 2023

## Community Access to Secondary Schools – Transfer of management of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure

Executive/routine  
Wards

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
  - 1.1.1 Approve the transfer of the management of non-sport lets in all secondary schools to Edinburgh Leisure.
  - 1.1.2 Delegate responsibility to officers to agree the timeline for the phased transfer of the service with Edinburgh Leisure.
  - 1.1.3 Request an annual report detailing the performance of sport and non-sport lets within secondary schools.

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# Report

## Community Access to Secondary Schools – Transfer of management of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report provides an update for Committee on the transfer of management of community access to non-sport spaces in secondary schools to Edinburgh Leisure.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 Since 2017, Edinburgh Leisure have managed community access to secondary school sports facilities.
- 3.2 At its meeting on [3 March 2020](#), Education, Children and Families Committee approved (in principle) the extension of Edinburgh Leisure's remit to include the management of community access to non-sport spaces in secondary schools.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 Edinburgh Leisure have managed community access to secondary school sports facilities for over five years and through this period have developed a robust booking process and operational infrastructure that has seen usage and net income grow each year.
- 4.2 Given Edinburgh Leisure's expertise in the field of facility management and community access to schools, it is a logical next step to consider the transfer of non-sport lets in secondary schools to the ALEO.
- 4.3 Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic each secondary school was responsible for the management of community access to their non-sport spaces. There was a mixed scene across the city in terms of the level of non-sport community access in secondary schools, with an overview captured in the March 2020 report to this committee.
- 4.4 Post pandemic and removal of all restrictions, non-sport community access has been slow to return and is currently managed by a seconded Business Manager

who administers non-sport let requests for all secondary schools. At present, 7 secondary schools have non-sport lets taking place.

- 4.5 A sustainable management option is therefore required to bring non-sport community access back to pre-pandemic levels and grow this area of business to allow the public to access the fantastic facilities within our secondary school estate whilst increasing income.
- 4.6 The financial model for secondary school sports lets involves Edinburgh Leisure gathering all income, subtracting their costs, and returning the surplus to the Council. The amount returned in 22/23 (not including Wester Hailes High School) was £618k.
- 4.7 Edinburgh Leisure's operational model for sports lets has at least one leisure attendant at each school with a management structure to oversee and develop the service. Some schools, given their size and the amount of activity taking place, have two leisure attendants.
- 4.8 As part of their proposal, Edinburgh Leisure have identified 8 schools that they would want to manage as a phase one of transferring non-sport lets (Broughton HS, Forresters HS / St Augustine's RC HS, Leith Academy, Portobello HS, Gracemount HS, James Gillespie's HS, Balerno HS, Craigroyston HS). The above schools were selected based on historical and current income / usage, geographical spread across the city, optimising net income and scope for future growth.
- 4.9 For sites with only one leisure attendant, Edinburgh Leisure would increase this to two in order to support the increase in activity. Edinburgh Leisure would also require additional management and booking administration resource. The total cost would be approximately £120,000 per annum for implementation of phase one.
- 4.10 Edinburgh Leisure have developed a financial forecast based on 5 spaces available for use, 5 days per week charged at the Council's 23/24 midsize classroom rate. Edinburgh Leisure are also assuming 30% uptake in year 1 with ambition to increase this to 40% in year 2 and 50% in year 3. This model estimates a net income position (total income minus EL's costs) of £383k for phase one in year 1, £551k in year 2 and £719k in year 3.
- 4.11 Edinburgh Leisure have also proposed a management fee of 30% of the net income amount to cover other corporate resources that are not totally dedicated to the project but required in order to put in place the necessary infrastructure and manage through the first year of implementation e.g. Finance, IT, HR. If the above forecast was delivered – the management fee to Edinburgh Leisure would be in the region of £114k for phase one in year 1. The proposal of a management fee was also approved by Edinburgh Leisure's Board when the report in Appendix 1 was considered in May this year.
- 4.12 Edinburgh Leisure will keep a record of the corporate resource to ensure the 30% charge reflects the input from Edinburgh Leisure officers and this will be reviewed by both organisations on an annual basis.

- 4.13 Following review and analysis of phase one, Council and Edinburgh Leisure officers would determine the progression and timeline of future phases and all non-sport community access in secondary schools transferring to Edinburgh Leisure.
- 4.14 Edinburgh Leisure's forecast for net income (without deduction of a management fee) should all 23 secondary schools be transferred, and using the same model as phase one, is £892k in year 1, £1.3M in year 2 and £1.75M in year 3.
- 4.15 Edinburgh Leisure's Board at its meeting on 19 June 2023 confirmed support to progress the transfer of management of non-sport lets.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 If approved by Committee, Council officers will work with Edinburgh Leisure to agree the timeline for the transfer. The anticipated start date for the transferred service is January 2024.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 The service has an income target of £370K for non-sports lets. Under the current arrangement, of each school being responsible for the management of lets in non-sports spaces, the income in 2018/19 and 2019/20 was £264K and £285K respectively for all 23 secondary schools. Income for January – March 2023 was £17K for 8 secondary schools and is unlikely to increase above this level of activity in 2023/24 resulting in a budget pressure of approximately £300K.
- 6.2 The transfer of non-sport lets to Edinburgh Leisure should result in an increase of usage by communities and clubs and increase income to the Council. Estimated net income (including deduction of Edinburgh Leisure's management fee at 30% across all years) for phase one in year 1 (2024/25) would be £268K increasing to £386K in year 2 and £504k in year 3. This would reduce the existing budget pressure in year 1 and deliver the income target in years 2 and 3. Edinburgh Leisure will keep records of corporate resource required to support this service and the management fee will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 6.3 If, following review and analysis of phase one, all 23 secondary schools were transferred, Edinburgh Leisure's estimate for net income (before any corporate management fee) in year 1 would be £892k rising to £1.75m in year 3.

## **7. Equality and Poverty Impact**

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- 7.1 The transfer of management of community access to non-sport spaces in secondary schools to Edinburgh Leisure will improve the consistency of access across the city. Facilitating access to these spaces through an improved service will reduce the need for individuals and groups to travel beyond their locality to deliver activities and programmes.

## **8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications**

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- 8.1 Improving access to our secondary estate will be another step towards improving the efficiency of use of the Council's facility infrastructure and a move towards directing use towards our newer buildings and reducing the size of the Council estate. Along with the reduction in travel time and distance the transfer of service to Edinburgh Leisure will have a positive effect on net carbon emissions.

## **9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact**

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- 9.1 There is a degree of risk around the additional infrastructure required by Edinburgh Leisure to deliver the service and the calculations made on the projected income. This could lead to net surplus targets not being met and further pressures placed on department budgets.
- 9.2 Officers at the Council and Edinburgh Leisure would monitor the performance of the service closely and mitigate the risk by minimising the additional infrastructure until required.
- 9.3 Risk is also present in not proceeding with the proposed model in leaving secondary Business Managers to continue to oversee bookings. Inconsistencies of practice based on local decision making and workload could interrupt the ambitions to expand and maximise income.

## **10. Background reading/external references**

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- 10.1 [Committee report March 2020](#)

## **11. Appendices**

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None