

Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee

Agenda

Date:	Friday, 30th July, 2010
Time:	10.00 am
Venue:	Committee Suite 2/3 - Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35, a total period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the meeting. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide 3 clear working days notice, in writing, in order for an informed answer to be given.

4. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2010.

For any apologies or requests for further information, or to give notice of a question to be asked by a member of the public

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5. **Cheshire East Leisure Facilities: A Potential Vision for the Future** (Pages 5 - 12)

To consider a report on a proposal document on the process by which the Leisure Facilities Service is structured, developed and transformed in the future to take into account the corporate priorities of the Council.

6. **Information Update on the Swim Free Programme** (Pages 13 - 22)

To consider a report on how the Council is approaching the 'Swim Free' programme in the light of the recent decision to stop external grant funding on 31 July 2010

There are no Part 2 Items

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee**
held on Wednesday, 2nd June, 2010 at The Tatton Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1DX

PRESENT**Cabinet Sub-Committee Members:**

Councillor Andrew Knowles (Chairman)
Councillor Roland Domleo
Councillor Frank Keegan

Advisory Members:

Councillor Ainsley Arnold
Councillor Terry Beard
Councillor John Hammond
Councillor Ray Westwood

Officers:

Mark Wheelton, Leisure and Green Spaces Manager
Keith Pickton, Leisure Facilities Manager
Paul Mountford, Legal and Democratic Services

Apologies:

Councillor David Brown
Councillor Paul Edwards
Guy Kilminster, Head of Health and Wellbeing
Rob Hyde, Service Development Manager

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

2 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2010 be approved as a correct record.

4 STRATEGIC DIRECTION OF THE SERVICE

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the strategic direction of the Health and Wellbeing Service.

The Sub-Committee had considered the final report by the Council's consultants, PMP Genesis Consulting, on the Cheshire East Leisure Management Options Appraisal at its meeting on 28th January.

Since the consultants' report had been received, the overall context of the leisure service had been reconsidered, taking into account the potential Building Schools for the Future initiative, changes to how customer services were managed, the need to invest in facilities and rationalise the links to the transformation of Adult services and Children and Families, and the need for closer working with the PCT and other strategic developments in Cheshire East. There was also an interest in making connections between leisure services and other strategic interests of the Council, such as library services.

The Sub-Committee had therefore advised Cabinet not to proceed for now with any further work to progress a Trust as the delivery model, and to place the Consultants' recommendation on hold while further consideration was given to the wider strategic issues and opportunities identified. Cabinet had accepted the recommendation of the Sub-Committee and had also resolved that the Sub-Committee be retained but that its terms of reference be developed to encompass wider considerations and aspects of the Health and Wellbeing Service.

The merger in August of the Health and Wellbeing Service with the Adults Service would create a new Directorate known as the Adults, Community Health and Wellbeing Department. As a result, there was a need to review the strategic thinking about the Service and its components individually and as a whole.

Any discussion about the future direction and composition of the Health and Wellbeing Service needed to be framed within the Commissioner/Provider model and the universal-to-targeted continuum (looking to shift more resource towards targeted interventions).

The Service was now developing a leisure strategy that took into account the research from the Consultants' recent work, the outcomes of the Facilities Improvement Strategy and other opportunities identified. In this respect, it was noted that the Consultants' report had acknowledged that the Council ran its leisure facilities well, achieving a high level of satisfaction among users. For this reason it was felt that a Trust approach was no longer the most appropriate way of taking the Service forward.

Members received a welcome pack on the Council's leisure facilities, together with the performance monitoring report for March 2010. Members felt that the welcome pack managed successfully to harmonise the disparate range of services which the Council provided.

Members were invited to offer suggestions on the future direction of the Service and in doing so had regard to a proposed framework for

examining Leisure provision which drew upon the Facilities Improvement work, the outcomes of the Leisure Options Appraisal and the priorities of the draft Corporate Plan.

Members offered a variety of comments and suggestions about the future direction of leisure provision:

1. different parts of the Borough had their own unique circumstances and could therefore benefit from a bespoke approach to leisure provision;
2. at the same time, there was a need to avoid a 'piecemeal' approach by adopting an overall corporate strategy;
3. joint user arrangements should be encouraged involving, among others, schools and town and parish councils;
4. joint user arrangements with schools would require a careful approach as some schools appeared to have a narrow view of their responsibilities towards their wider communities; in particular, caution was urged regarding the transfer of swimming pools to school governors;
5. primary schools appeared to have closer links with their communities than secondary schools and therefore the Council should target them;
6. the 'leisure offer' was not to build new facilities but to maximise the use of existing facilities;
7. the condition of Crewe's swimming pool needed to be addressed as a priority;
8. whilst noting the positive attendance figures for under 16 and over 60 year-olds at swimming pools, and the need to target these user groups, it should be recognised that users falling between these two groups were the only ones providing a source of income and that therefore their continued use of swimming pools was essential, particularly in light of the current financial climate;
9. schools were focussing on the health of children, and so the Council needed to target other groups such as the elderly;
10. the Council needed to move away from the idea that leisure centres were the only places where leisure activities could take place and should look more towards the use of facilities such as village and community halls;
11. there was a need to consider first principles and in particular to identify which groups the Council was trying to help and what needed to be provided to meet their needs;

12. the Council needed to provide universality but within this needed to target certain priority groups such as the elderly, the disadvantaged and those with statistically lower levels of life expectancy; there was an abundance of usage and other data to inform this;
13. inaccessibility to leisure facilities was partly caused by the location of such facilities in suburbs rather than town centres;
14. some services were better delivered locally within communities while other services, such as swimming pools, were better delivered centrally;
15. the Service needed to think about how to encourage people to become involved in leisure activities from within their own lifestyles;
16. the Service also needed to look at what other local authorities were doing and to identify good models of provision;
17. given the resources available to the Council, there was a need to develop an evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, approach to developing leisure provision;
18. there was a need to be aware of relying too heavily on external funding for key service provision and raising people's expectations in circumstances where funding could be withdrawn;
19. with regard to the 'universal to targeted' continuum, emphasis should be placed more on targeted than universal provision;
20. in this respect, the Council should move away from the traditional view of leisure facilities simply providing 'leisure' and should rebrand its services along the lines of 'promoting health and fitness'.

RESOLVED

That the draft framework document for a leisure strategy as appended to the report be developed to take on board the views expressed by Members, and the matter be considered further at the next meeting.

5 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held in about a month's time on a date to be agreed.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.30 am

Councillor A Knowles (Chairman)

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 July 2010

Report of: Head of Health & Wellbeing

Subject/Title: Cheshire East Leisure Facilities: A Potential Vision for the Future

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report is in the form of a proposal document to Members based on the discussions held at the Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting held on 2 June 2010.
- 1.2 Subject to its approval by Members the document could form the process by which the Leisure Facilities Service is structured, developed and transformed in the future to take into account the corporate priorities of the Council.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members consider the attached briefing document 'Cheshire East Council Leisure Facilities – A Potential Vision for the Future' and recommend it as the strategic approach for the future delivery of the leisure facilities service.
- 2.2 Subject to agreement by the Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee the paper be submitted to Cabinet for formal approval and implementation.

3.0 Background and Options

- 3.1 As Members are aware the Council has conducted a review of the leisure facilities service through consultants PMP Genesis, and that this Committee advised Cabinet not to proceed at the present time with any further work to progress a leisure trust, whilst further consideration be given to the wider strategic issues and opportunities that are available to the authority.
- 3.2 At its last meeting on 2 June 2010 of this Committee, Members were invited to put forward their views on the future direction of the service taking into account a variety of considerations including:
 - a move from the provision of universal to more targeted services
 - focus on a Commissioner/Provider model

- a move towards more localised service delivery including the transfer of assets

3.3 A wide range of views were expressed as summarised in the minutes. Based on these the 'Vision' document has been drawn up (Appendix 1). The document summarises all the work undertaken to date and seeks to categorise the centres by 'type'. For each centre type a proposal is made on how the Council should proceed in the future. Officers will be available at the meeting to outline the proposals more fully and to answer Members' questions.

4.0 Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 The merger of the service into the new Adult Community Health and Wellbeing Directorate will require new ways of thinking and working with an agreed strategic approach to service delivery, but whilst retaining flexibility to allow the Council to respond to changes such as the Local Management of Schools agenda.

5.0 Wards Affected

5.1 All.

6.0 Local Ward Members

6.1 All.

7.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

7.1 The development of a strategic approach to the review of the Leisure Facilities Service and its functionality fits within the Corporate Plan, together with a number of the Council's transformation projects.

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 None.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 The provision of Leisure facilities is a discretionary service and is subject to powers primarily under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Government Act, 1972 and the general "Wellbeing" powers in the Local Government Act, 2000.

9.2 The council is required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way it's functions and services are exercised having regard

to a combination of economy, effectiveness and efficiency. (Local Government Act 1999, S.3)

- 9.3 The recommendations contained in this report comply with the above powers and duties.
- 9.4 Legal advice should be taken in the future in respect of any specific projects identified that propose the transfer and/or amalgamation of facilities as described in the attached paper.

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 None at this stage.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Appendix 1

Cheshire East Council Leisure Facilities **A Potential Vision for the Future**

1. Background

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council inherited a range of main leisure facilities from the former Congleton, Macclesfield and Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council's on the 1st April 2009.
- 1.2 A complete review of the leisure facility service undertaken by external consultants PMP on behalf of a special leisure facilities cabinet sub committee identified that the inherited service was, despite the age and condition of the buildings, an efficient well managed and high quality service with high levels of use and cost recovery in comparison with similar services elsewhere in the country.
- 1.3 The consultants concluded that there would be very little to be gained at this stage from the new authority, particularly financially, from transferring the management of the existing leisure facilities into a trust or other alternative management arrangement.
- 1.4 As a consequence, the Cabinet Sub Committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the leisure facilities service should remain managed in house for the immediate future although it did agree that a further market testing exercise should be undertaken to ascertain interest in investment in and management of the golf course at Malkins Bank.
- 1.5 As a result of this decision, and in liaison with Sport England, work is now also being undertaken to review and recommend an appropriate medium term strategy for the future of the remainder of the inherited leisure facilities to ensure that they remain affordable and appropriate to contribute to the strategic health and well being aspirations for local people as set out in the current community and corporate strategies.

2. Current Leisure Facilities

- 2.1 The current main leisure facilities inherited by Cheshire East can be categorised as follows;

Type A – Principal towns and Key Service Centres with community swimming pools

These facilities are highly regarded and extensively used by the local community. The more complex nature of the skills and expertise required to operate and programme such facilities safely and efficiently and to ensure the widest possible community access and support make professional leisure management support essential. From an operational perspective managing a pool alongside the remaining on site leisure facilities is also considered the most efficient approach to such a facility. Stand alone pools without supporting facilities being the most expensive option in terms of management arrangements.

Type B - Joint Use High Schools with dry sports facilities only

In the main, these facilities are only available for community use in the evenings and weekends during term time plus day time during school holiday periods.

Type C – Other stand alone dry sports facilities

These are more specialist facilities, including playing fields. Malkins Bank is already the subject of an external market testing exercise to see whether a specialist golf operator working to a service contract would be a more appropriate management option.

Type D – All other school, voluntary or private sports and leisure facilities with the potential for wider community use but not currently directly financially supported for community leisure activities by the Council

These include all other non “joint use” high schools, primary schools, voluntary sector clubs and facilities and even private sector facilities that have the potential for wider community access if it were supported financially by the Council.

- 2.2 Attendances for the entire Cheshire East leisure facility service were 2,729,284 in 2009-10, the first full year of the new Council. This compares with a total of 2,581,792 attendances in the previous year, the last year of the former authority areas, a 6% increase year on year. The biggest increases in attendances were amongst the young (16 years and under) and the elderly (60 years and over), the key targeted groups.
- 2.3 Of the attendances in 2009-10, the Type A facilities tend to be the busiest as they involve swimming pools with a diverse community swimming programme, including casual public swimming.

3. Proposed Strategic Approach

- 3.1 Type A facilities have a very high community profile, are highly valued by the local community and there are no real alternatives locally which offer the same universal swimming programmes and wider community access. These facilities, involving pools, also require the highest levels of professional leisure management expertise and experience but are the least attractive to others to operate without transferring all or most of the current budgets involved. Given they involve valuable and valued community swimming pools, it is not recommended that these facilities are considered for transfer at this stage although they would need to be reviewed on a site by site basis.
- 3.2 Of the remaining facilities listed within Type B or Type C, it could be possible, given the right safeguards, service level agreements and client monitoring to negotiate the transfer of the operation of some or all of these facilities to other partners, including High School Governors and Town or Parish Councils.
- 3.3 In most cases, any potential transfer of Type B or Type C facilities to another partner may be met by a demand by the potential new partner for a complete transfer of all or most of the current revenue budget available to support these community facilities and programmes. However, if it were possible to negotiate transfers without having to pass over the same revenue commitments, the savings made could be considered for investing in widening the community use of all of the facilities included in the Type D category, many of which will be much closer to local people who currently live to far away from the existing main council facilities.
- 3.4 If it were possible to move towards this level of direct and indirect provision, the Council would remain responsible for the main community swimming pools and appropriately located main centres of excellence. By following this strategy the Council could also then concentrate its limited resources on a “less but better” approach to improving the physical quality and efficiency of these valued community facilities rather than trying to constantly spread declining resources even more thinly to try and maintain a large building stock.

4. Summary

- 4.1 The Council's leisure facilities currently provide an efficient and effective service with attendances and income increasing, however, the building stock is out dated, in some cases not very appropriately located and the revenue expenditure required to maintain the current service in the current limited locations may not be the most effective way of widening out access to health and leisure activities to a wider cross section of the population.
- 4.2 Main community swimming pools and their associate programmes including casual access to swimming for the entire population are very unlikely to be replicated by the private sector, are highly valued by local communities and require a level of professional expertise and experience in terms of programming and operation not generally available in schools or small voluntary sports clubs. Where indoor sports facilities are also provide alongside a swimming pool, the overall facility is far more cost effective and can act as a hub or centre of excellence often offering spectator facilities, supporting a wider network of sports facilities and programmes delivered more locally at high schools, primary schools and at voluntary sports clubs and community centres as appropriate.
- 4.3 If it were possible to transfer via negotiated service level agreements some or all of the facilities currently offering dry sports facilities only in Type B and Type C to high schools, town or parish councils or appropriately resourced larger voluntary sports clubs or groups, and without having to transfer all of the current revenue budgets required to operate these facilities in house, these savings could then be used to pump prime and encourage via new service level agreements other high schools, primary schools and voluntary groups in Type D to consider extending community access to their facilities to help widen the availability of leisure facilities more people in their immediate localities.
- 4.4 The less but better approach and the retention of Type A centres of excellence would also support amalgamation of other leisure and health and well being services such as civic hall or library services to a single building location and, depending upon their interest, could also be extended to co – located partnerships with health services.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure Facilities Cabinet Sub-Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 July 2010

Report of: Head of Health & Wellbeing

Subject/Title: Information Update on the Swim Free Programme

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Committee with an overview of how the Council is approaching the 'Swim Free' programme in the light of the recent decision to stop external grant funding on 31 July 2010.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members note the information provided in relation to the 'Swim Free' programme including the Communications Plan and associated publicity.

3.0 Background and Options

- 3.1 As Members are aware, the Council is currently taking advantage of the Government's two-year 'Swim Free' programme which commenced on 1 April 2009. Following an announcement on the 17 June 2010, the funding from the Department of Culture, Media & Sport will cease from 31 July 2010 and the Council will only receive the pro rata funding for up to this date.

- 3.2 To support the programme the Council has received the following funding per year for 2009/10 and was due to receive it for 2010/11:

- To support public swimming for those aged 60 and over: £119,493.
- To support public swimming for those aged 16 and under: £209,269.

Total: £328,762

The cost of running the scheme in Year One was £111,263. In order to offset the additional costs of the scheme in Year Two the Council added a growth item of £100,000 for 2010/11 to cover this additional cost of delivering the programme.

- 3.3 The scheme currently has the following numbers registered:

- Swim Free Senior: 6,316
- Swim Free Junior: 31,327

Although not all of those registered will have taken advantage of the scheme during the first year, the Council was placed 11th out of 258 participating authorities with total swim numbers of 192,536. This compares with 127,406 the previous year prior to the commencement of the scheme.

- 3.4 In addition to the increased participation in swimming that the programme has generated, the Council has also been able to utilise £108,000 of additional capital funding to support physical improvements at several of the Council's pools. This funding was made available to the Council as it is running both age groups in the scheme.
- 3.5 Following agreement with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, these improvements have included upgrades to the male and female swimming pool changing rooms, showers and toilets at Wilmslow Leisure Centre, which were completed in December 2009. A similar refurbishment scheme is in place to be completed later this year at Sandbach Leisure Centre, and a new main entrance and reception is being provided at Nantwich Swimming Pool. This will provide, as at Sandbach, significantly improved access for disabled people. This is currently awaiting planning permission, but is due for completion later this calendar year.
- 3.6 As a result of the decision to end the funding, the Council was faced with a series of options on how to proceed from 31 July 2010 onwards. A series of options was presented to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing:

Option A:

Give notice to all existing free swimming card holders that as a result of the withdrawal of funding, free swimming will end on 31 July 2010.

With this option the Service would continue to promote swimming as an effective form of exercise through its normal marketing strategy and will identify new opportunities for promotion. Some of the possible marketing activities would include:

- Continue to run centre 'family fun days' which offer free swimming in association with the Amateur Swimming Association.
- To identify suitable price promotions at key times throughout the year in line with normal marketing planning.
- Consider providing certain sessions free of charge for target user groups, e.g. specific days or certain school holidays.
- Ongoing promotion of the 'Everybody' options scheme which provides discounted access to certain target groups, including those affected by the withdrawal of the Swim Free scheme.
- Promotion of the Everybody memberships which include swimming as part of a monthly fee paid by Direct Debit and offer considerable savings when compared to casual payment.

Option B:

Discontinue free swimming for the 60's and over on 31 July 2010 in line with the Government announcement, but allow juniors 16 and under to continue free swimming for the school summer holidays until 31 August 2010.

With this option at the end of August 2010 the service would promote swimming as in Option A above.

Option C:

Discontinue all free swimming on 31 July 2010 in line with the Government's announcement, but to offer to transfer all previous junior and senior free swimming cardholders to the existing Council 'Everybody' options card at no extra charge.

With this option all existing Swim Free cardholders would access the existing discount scheme which provides a 50% discount off the standard adult charge for swimming on a 'pay as you go basis'. The normal annual charge for an 'Everybody' options card on this basis is £5. The charge for a 'Swim Free' card has been £2 per person.

- 3.6 Having considered the various options available, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing has requested officers to proceed with **Option B**; to discontinue free swimming for those 60 and over on 31 July 2010 but to continue free swimming for those 16 and under until 31 August 2010.

This decision was made taking into account the following:

- (i) That there was sufficient funding available both from the Government (four months to 31 July 2010) and £100,000 from the Council's own revenue funding to allow the Council to remain within budget. This takes into account the usage trends for last year and the first two months of this year, where there was a disproportionate use of the facilities earlier in the financial year than through the winter months.
- (ii) That maintaining the 'Swim Free' for the 16 and under for the summer holiday was a positive approach.
- (iii) For the future there is still the ongoing ability to market some limited free swim activities as part of the normal programming as set out in 3.5 above.
- (iv) Option C was considered (transferring all users to the 'Everybody' options scheme). Based on current usage trends there would have been a shortfall of over £75,000 above the available budget. There remains, however, the availability of the Options scheme to anyone at an annual payment of £5.

4.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The decision was taken based on the options set out in Section 3 of this report.

5.0 Wards Affected

5.1 All.

6.0 Local Ward Members

6.1 All.

**7.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change
- Health**

7.1 No direct implications.

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 The decision to implement Option B was based on the finance available. There will be a need to continue to proactively market the service to ensure that income levels are maintained.

8.2 As part of the annual approval of fees and charges, those for swimming for both age groups are already approved and in operation for those who are not registered on the 'Swim Free' scheme. In addition, the pricing policy for the 'Everybody' options card which gives a range of discounts, has also been approved by the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing.

8.3 Implementation of any change will not affect those targeted groups that already have approved free access, including Cheshire East Council's "cared for" children and young people, current members of the armed forces, those with severe long-term disability, and children under three years of age.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 The provision of Leisure facilities is a discretionary service and is subject to powers primarily under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Government Act, 1972 and the general "Wellbeing" powers in the Local Government Act, 2000.

9.2 Under S.19 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Authority may make any recreational facilities provided by it "...available for use by such persons as it thinks fit either without charge or on payment of such charges as the authority thinks fit."

9.3 Local Authorities have a duty under Section 507B(1) Education Act 1996, as amended by Section 6(1) Education and Inspections Act 2006 to provide, as far as reasonably practicable, sufficient educational leisure-time and recreational leisure-time activities to children within its area.

- 9.4 In the absence of any funding being received specifically to be used towards providing free swimming in the area, the proposals contained in this report comply with the council's current powers and obligations.
- 9.5 As part of the agreement where customers signed up for the 'Swim Free' scheme there is a clause within the terms and conditions giving the Council the right to withdraw or amend the conditions of the scheme without notice.

10.0 Risk Management

Customer Communications:

- 10.1 Leisure facilities customer service standards promise a notice period of a minimum of two weeks for any major changes to activities, availability or pricing. A detailed Communications Plan has been produced (Appendix 1) which aims to deliver the message to the maximum number of users without incurring costs.
- 10.2 Consideration was given to more direct methods of communication, such as letter. Whilst this is more likely to ensure the message is received by every customer, the postage costs incurred would have been in excess of £10,000. An example of the poster publicity being used to inform customers of the changes in service provision is shown in Appendix 2.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Swim Free Scheme Cancellation

Appendix 1

Communications Plan

The government has announced the withdrawal of the Swim Free scheme with effect from July 31st. Cheshire East Council has confirmed that it will fund a temporary extension of the scheme for customers aged 16 & under until 31st August. The following plan details the methods for informing our customers in the most cost-effective way.

Ref	Action	Responsible	Due By	Progress
1	Withdraw new registrations from the scheme	All	18/6/10	Completed
2	Holding press statement while considering options	Media Team	18/6/10	Completed
3	Update staff team while awaiting decision	JW/KP	18/6/10	Completed
4	Issue press statement for under 16s extension through August	Media Team	3/7/10	Draft – Awaiting Photo
5	Update staff team on extension through August	JW/KP	29/6/10	Completed
6	Update website with details on extension and over 60s cancellation*	JW	5/7/10	Completed
7	Update centre web pages with link to announcement	JW	5/7/10	Completed
8	Post Facebook page attached link to CEC website statement/info	JW	5/7/10	Completed
9	Circulate pre-worded notice for display in centres	JW	5/7/10	Completed
10	Update email contact database via NewZapp system	JW	7/7/10	Completed
11	Ensure all reception staff inform customers verbally when using Swim Free in July (Over 60s) and August (under 16s) that the scheme finishes at the end of the month	All Centre Managers Area Managers	Ongoing	
12	Ensure all reception staff upsell alternative payment methods (e.g. Options/Everybody memberships) as a more cost-effective method	All Centre Managers Area Managers	Ongoing	
13	Remove final references to Swim Free scheme from website (e.g. price lists)	All content editors	1/9/10	
14	Remove Swim Free promotional materials (e.g. posters) from leisure centres	All	1/9/10	

**Use Swim Free page for common details with individual site pages linking to a single information source.*

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Swim Free Announcement

Following on from the recent government announcement regarding the withdrawal of the Swim Free scheme from July 31, Cheshire East Council can now confirm the following arrangements for the end of the scheme:

Registrations

New registrations to the scheme have now ended for all customers. Existing memberships will remain valid as detailed below.

60 & Over Members

The Swim Free scheme for members aged 60 & over will end on July 31. On August 1, all prices will revert to normal published levels.

16 & Under Members

Cheshire East Council has agreed to extend free swimming through the 2010 summer holidays for members aged 16 & under and therefore the scheme will continue until August 31. From September 1, all prices will revert to normal published levels.

For full details of normal pricing levels, please see the website or pick up a price guide from reception.

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