

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**SPORT, LEISURE AND CULTURE
CABINET MEMBER**

SOUTH AXHOLME COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL - FREE SWIMMING

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.2 To consider financial support to South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association to enable them to offer free swimming in line with council run facilities across North Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The key points of the report are as follows.
- The council has committed to providing free swimming to those aged 16 and under and 60 and over.
 - We have received a request for funding to offer free swimming at South Axholme Community swimming Pool. This needs considering against available funds.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The council has introduced free public swimming sessions for those aged 60 (or over) and those aged 16 (or under) starting 1 April 2009 until 31 March 2011.
- 2.2 The Government's "Free Swimming Programme" is a £140 million package offered to all local authorities in a series of funding programmes. The programme is divided into four distinct elements:
- (i) Pot 1 – A fund to local authorities to allow them to introduce free swimming for those aged 60 (or over). Government is making available £15 million per annum in 2009-10 and 2010-11.
 - (ii) Pot 2 – A further fund available to those local authorities who opted to provide free swimming for those aged 60 (or over) and wish to provide an additional offer for those aged 16 (or under). Government is making available £25 million per annum in 2009-10 and 2010-11.
 - (iii) To support local authorities in making swimming free for those aged 60 (or over) and those aged 16 (or under), Government has also made available £10 million of Capital funding in 2008/09 to modernise swimming pool provision. All

local authorities that signed up to participate in Pot 1 and Pot 2 were entitled to a one-off capital grant in 2008-09.

(iv) Government is also making available £25 million capital per annum in 2009/10 and 2010/11 to modernise swimming pool provision and support more ambitious plans for free swimming. Local authorities that have signed up to participate in Pots 1 and 2 can bid for the modernisation and enhancement of their pools (Minimum Grant £50,000, no upper limit set).

2.3 At present the free swimming offer is only available for local authorities and local authority-owned pools. The funding available from Government is insufficient to cover the whole cost of introducing free swimming across North Lincolnshire and the council, in setting its budget for 2010/11, has included a sum of £46,000 to make up the shortfall.

2.4 An application has been received from the South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association to continue offering free swimming in Epworth. This will ensure that people are given every opportunity to access a local pool in North Lincolnshire.

2.5 The report was urgent to enable the funding to be in place from 1 April 2010.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 In respect of the request for financial support from South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association, our options are:

- approving the application as submitted
- refuse support
- offer grant support at a reduced level.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The application received meets the council's objective of providing opportunity for people across North Lincolnshire to access free swimming. There are sufficient funds in the budget to provide the amounts recommended.

4.2 Rejection of the application would mean that South Axholme Community Swimming Pool would be unable to offer free swimming.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The free swimming top up budget for this year is £46,000. There is £17,000 available in this budget to support Free swimming at South Axholme Community Swimming Pool.

5.1.2 The application is for £25,000, which follows a detailed analysis of usage last year. Original estimates omitted under 5's admissions and operational costs have risen since last year.

5.1.3 We have successfully drawn in other funds to support swimming development in North Lincolnshire as follows:

- DCSF School swimming lessons top up – Key stage 2, £2700 top up funding via each of the two school sports partnerships in North Lincolnshire
- Amateur Swimming Association free swimming lesson initiative - £250 per 6 week course with up to £350 equipment/transport and staffing budget also available per course
- Horizons – Funding available to provide extended activities for targeted groups

5.1.4 We are committed to give North Lincolnshire residents the opportunity to participate in these programmes. We have offered South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association the opportunity to become a partner in delivering the following:

- Top up swimming lessons for schools 20-30 April 2010 – 7 sessions @ £40/hr pool hire and 5 sessions in the May half term holiday @£40/hr
- Horizons out of school hours extended programme - weekly 1hr session @£50/hr pool hire
- Other activity courses for targeted groups @ £250 per course of 6 sessions

5.2 Staffing, Property and IT

5.2.1 There are no implications for staffing, property or IT.

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 We are working hard to reach our diversity plan outcomes. One way of doing this is by removing any financial barrier to participation.

6.2 One of the benefits of increasing participation in active recreation is the opportunity to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. This is by using active recreation as a diversionary activity. Our grant aid schemes help facilitate increased participation.

6.3 There are no other related implications.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 We have consulted with South Axholme Community swimming Pool Association regarding how we can best work together to deliver free swimming at their pool and offer other swimming opportunities.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That we offer £17,000 support to South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association to provide free swimming sessions for those aged 16 and under and 60 and over for the 2010/11 financial year.
- 8.2 That we work in partnership with the South Axholme Community Swimming Pool Association to give North Lincolnshire residents the opportunity to take part in additional swimming opportunities

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Leisure Services Grant Aid – Application pack