

Overview Select Committee

**31st July 2014**

Report on Leicester City Council's  
School Swimming Traded Service

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Report of, Director of Culture and Neighbourhood  
Services

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**City Mayor**

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All Wards
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- Report version number: 3

### 1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Overview Select Committee on the uptake of school swimming within the city, and on how the school swimming traded service is developing.

The briefing follows on from earlier reports presented to the Overview Select Committee in October 2013 and March 2014.

The Overview Select Committee is asked to note the development and provide any comment.

### 2. Main report : Background Information

Primary schools have a duty to educate their pupils in water safety and provide swimming lessons during Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum. The DfE states that pupils should achieve 25m unaided using recognised strokes on their front and back (in addition to using a range of personal survival skills).

Despite this mandatory requirement in the curriculum, a local audit conducted in autumn 2011 found that approximately 50% of schools in Leicester City do not take their children swimming.

In 2013, the Amateur Swimming Association in partnership with Kellogg's conducted the largest ever investigation into school swimming. The report was entitled '*Learning the Lesson: The Future of School Swimming*' and involved surveying 3,501 primary schools in England. The findings highlighted that only 42% of pupils in Leicester achieve 25m by the end of their Key Stage 2 Education. This is lower than the regional average of 52% for the East Midlands. It suggests that there are 1.1 million children aged 7 – 11 years old in England who are failing short of this minimal requirement.

School swimming lessons provide a very important opportunity for Leicester pupils to learn to swim and have fun in the water, and for many children this may be the only opportunity they have to learn to swim. Therefore it is vital that Leicester City Council work in partnership with schools to develop a high quality and affordable school swimming programme to teach a valuable skill to pupils that will stay with them for life.

#### Swimming programme update

The appointment of a School Swimming Manager took place in December 2013 and the number of city schools who use one of the council's seven swimming pools has already increased. Currently 65% of schools use our facilities compared to 50% in 2011.

This number will further increase to 71% by autumn 2014 with the bookings that have been confirmed to date. In September 2014, 85 out of 120 city schools in total will be using Leicester City Council facilities for the delivery of their school swimming programme (71%). The target for 2014/15 is 75% of the city's state schools to be participating. We are on track to achieve this.

Braunstone Leisure Centre has seen the most growth in their school swimming programme with the number of pool hours used by schools increasing from 6.5 hours in January 2014 to 15.5 hours in September 2014.

### **School swimming as a traded service**

The Council's school swimming programme is being developed as a traded service to provide a single point of contact to schools for transport, pool hire and swimming instruction to make the process easier for schools to fulfil their duty in the provision of swimming lessons. This will be formally launched in January 2015.

In May 2014, local transport companies were invited to a meeting to discuss the project and have since been provided with the school timetable for swimming in the city. During July a formal tendering process will take place with the aim to appoint a lead transport provider by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014.

### **Non-participating schools**

Seven schools in the city use other facilities that are either closer to them (saving the school transport costs) or where they report to receive a more favourable deal on pool hire and swimming instruction. The council's pool hire and instruction prices for schools are being reviewed so that once a transport contract is secured, we offer a competitively priced package to schools.

There are several infant schools, independent schools and secondary schools who do not offer swimming to their pupils as they do not have to deliver swimming as a mandatory requirement of their national curriculum. However, the council will promote the service to these schools too and encourage usage by all.

### **Water safety training**

In June 2014, the council supported the Royal Life Saving Society's (RLSS) Drowning Prevention Campaign. In the week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> June, over 3,000 pupils received a water safety lesson at the pool as part of their school swimming lesson time. The session taught personal survival skills and basic rescue techniques.

Several schools were visited and an assembly and classroom activity delivered to teach the young people how to stay safe in and around water this summer. This service was also traded with over 2,000 pupils receiving water safety education in the classroom. This also generated positive publicity with articles in the Leicester Mercury, on the council's web pages, Twitter and Facebook accounts and the RLSS's Twitter/Facebook pages and magazines.

Several schools are also interested in CPR/First Aid sessions in the autumn term and this will also be offered as a traded service to schools.

### **Training developments**

As part of the council's commitment to developing a high quality school swimming programme, our swimming instructors have been provided with National Curriculum training in swimming and school teachers have voiced a strong call for further training in swimming for themselves. In October there will be some short swimming courses provided for school teachers involved in the delivery of swimming for their school, and these will also be traded as part of the service.

### **Primary school funding**

Leading on from the £150 million national investment into School Sport and PE for 2013 – 2015, which entitles primary schools to approximately £9,000 each of additional funding per year to improve the quality and provision of Sport & PE; a further £750 million will be provided to School Sport and PE for the next 5 years, until 2020. This additional funding will help schools to access, or increase access, to swimming.

## **3. Details of Scrutiny**

This report is being considered by OSC.

## **4. Financial, legal and other implications**

### 4.1 Financial implications

The briefing provides an update on national funding for primary school sport and local plans to use £90k of public health funding to “pump prime” a swimming traded service for schools, with a view to the scheme becoming self-funding through charges to schools. The expected viability of the service in the longer term will need to be closely monitored, particularly as the time limited sports grant received by schools and the public health pump-priming funding will finish at around the same time.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 29 7390.

#### 4.2 Equality Implications

The swimming programme should positively benefit all protected characteristics. To ensure that this is the case and all pupils have the opportunity to access swimming through their school, it is strongly recommended that periodic analysis of user profile is carried out to identify impact of the program, and to identify any gaps in take up.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, 454 4147

#### 4.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Implications

The carbon emissions from regular school coach trips such as to swimming lessons are included in the Council's carbon footprint. So any increases in uptake of swimming lessons will add to the Council's carbon emissions. However, with school trips accounting for only 0.15% of the Council's total emissions in 2012/13 the impact would be minimal.

Duncan Bell, Senior Environmental Consultant, Environment Team. Ext. 37 2249.

#### 4.3 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

This initiative will contribute to priorities in relation to the health and wellbeing of children and to reducing health inequalities.

#### **5. Background information and other papers:**

None.

#### **6. Summary of appendices:**

None.