

	AGENDA ITEM NO.
Report Cover Sheet	
Name of Meeting:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	22 nd October 2007
Report Title:	Review of Warwick District Council staff membership scheme of leisure centres
Summary of report:	The report outlines proposals to update the staff membership scheme to encourage more members of WDC staff to participate in physical activity. It also contains proposals to offer similar schemes to Warwickshire County Council, Primary Health Care Trust and considers options for rolling out to commercial employers in the future.
For further information please contact (report author);	Rose Winship Leisure and Amenities 01926 456223 rose.winship@warwickdc.gov.uk
Business Unit:	Leisure and Amenities
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the policy framework:	No
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Wards of the District directly affected by this decision:	N/A
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan?	Yes (34)
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government	No

(Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	
Date and name of meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number:	N/A
Background Papers:	

Consultation Undertaken		
Below is a table of the Council's regular consultees. However not all have to be consulted on every matter and if there was no obligation to consult with a specific consultee they will be marked as n/a.		
Consultees	Yes/ No	Who
Other Committees	n/a	
Ward Councillors	n/a	
Portfolio Holders	YES	Cllr White
Other Councillors	n/a	
Warwick District Council recognised Trades Unions	YES	Unison GMB
Other Warwick District Council Service Areas	YES	Personnel
Project partners	n/a	
Parish/Town Council	n/a	
Highways Authority	n/a	
Residents	n/a	
Citizens Panel	n/a	
Other consultees	n/a	

Officer Approval

With regard to officer approval all reports must be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance Services and Legal Services.

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director(s)	3 rd Sept 2007	Mary Hawkins
Chief Executive	27 th Sept 2007	
CMT	27 th Sept 2007	
Section 151 Officer	19 th Sept 2007	
Legal	19 th Sept 2007	
Finance	19 th Sept 2007	
Final Decision?		Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 1.1 Members are asked to approve the following elements to the Corporate Membership Scheme.

Warwick District Staff Scheme

- 1.1.1 The scheme would be open to all WDC employees (except those on casual contracts) and elected members. It is not extended to family members. There would be 2 versions of membership:
- 1.1.2 The first option is an annual fee of £25 per person. Discussions have been had with Unison representatives who have previously supported this scheme by subsidising any of their members joining the scheme by contributing £10 to the annual fee. Unison have indicated that they wish to continue this support and may consider increasing the subsidy to members on the new scheme.

The scheme would include:

- Swimming:** Junior swim rates at all times in public sessions (£1.55 Abbey Fields, £1.75 Newbold Comyn, £1.55, St Nicholas Park) **No change to original scheme**
- Pyramids gyms:** Free induction, training programme and 12 months membership (worth approx £35.00) **No change to original scheme**
- Concessionary rates at all times, payable on each visit (£1.85 Newbold and Castle Farm, £1.80 St Nicholas Park). **Original scheme charge was off peak rate £3.10**
- Golf:** Under 18's rate at all times – 18 holes £8.00 weekdays, £5.00 weekends and bank holidays; 9 holes weekdays £4.30, weekends and bank holidays £5.20. **This is a new addition to the scheme**

Discount vouchers would also be included for those joining the scheme for selected activities including sports hall activities, fitness classes, fitness tests, childrens swimming

Inclusion on mailing list for promotions and activities

- 1.1.3 The alternative option available to Warwick District Council staff would be a 30% discount on the existing Direct Debit options for swimming and gym memberships. These memberships would be administered in the normal manner through the BACS system.

Type of membership	Standard monthly payment	WDC staff monthly payment
Spa (swimming) during all public sessions	£25.00	£17.50
Off Peak gym membership	£22.50	£15.75
Peak gym membership	£32.50	£22.75
Royal membership (swimming, gym and selected exercise classes)	£42.50	£29.75

1.2 **Warwickshire County Council and Primary Health Care Trust**

It is proposed that the scheme is extended to our colleagues at Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire PCT.

- 1.2.1 It is proposed that the discounts being offered to WDC staff, in particular for use of Pyramids gyms and the golf course, are particularly generous and could, if extended to WCC result in significant loss of income. Therefore it is proposed that the annual membership fee to WCC staff and PCT staff is set at £50 per annum per member of staff and that for the first year the scheme for WCC and PCT is limited to 100 memberships per organisation. This will be reviewed after 12 months when we have data to evaluate the success of the scheme; members are asked to approve delegated authority be given to the Head of Culture to continue the scheme should the pilot scheme show that there is no detrimental effect on capacity for full paying members to use the facilities.

1.3 **Commercial business scheme**

The current fees and charges schedule include a “Corporate Membership Scheme” available to local businesses. This scheme has not been popular and only a handful of local businesses have bought into the scheme.

- 1.3.1 Members are asked to approve 2 options. The first would be the package offered to WCC and PCT; the alternative would be based on a direct debit membership with unlimited use of swimming and gym facilities for a monthly fee. This latter option has recently been sold on a one off agreement to the Law Society for 10 members of staff generating £4,000. Approval is sought for the Head of Culture to have delegated authority to offer local businesses discounts of up to 30% discount on the standard Direct Debit packages.

2. **REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 For some years WDC employees have been able to join the Corporate Scheme for membership of the Council's leisure facilities and receive the benefits of reduced charges for use of these facilities. There are approximately 35 employees currently on the scheme.

- 2.2 The scheme has been in place in its current form for approximately 10 years and it is considered that now is a good time to review the content of the scheme and relaunch it to attract more employees. The objective of the “Get Active” initiative being promoted by the Leisure Unit at present is focussed on increasing the levels of physical activity of local residents; where better to start in promoting a healthy lifestyle and fulfilling our commitment as a responsible employer than with our own employees in encouraging them to participate in more active recreation
- 2.3 There have also been recent approaches from Warwickshire County Council and the Primary Care Trust to work in partnership with Warwick District Council to encourage their employees to take more exercise. This would be a benefit to WCC and the PCT in being seen to promote healthy lifestyles, but would also be a commercial benefit to WDC in increasing attendances at our facilities. It was felt however that until the scheme had been reviewed for WDC employees it was not appropriate to enter into a partnership with either of the above organisations.
- 2.4 A further related project has been identified in the “Get Active” action plan; local businesses are considered to be a source of potential new customers for the leisure centres. Many employers are now keen to promote “healthy workplaces” and encourage their employees to lead active lives. Leisure are keen to create a package that could be promoted to these local employers; however, again, it was felt essential that we revised the WDC scheme before this was pursued further.

3. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED**

- 3.1 The alternative option would be to allow the scheme to continue in its current format with a small number of WDC staff benefiting from the scheme, and an opportunity being missed for generating additional income for the leisure centres from other organisations.

4. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 4.1 It is impossible to estimate the number of staff who would join the schemes outlined above and what those staff pay currently per annum for the use of the councils leisure facilities. An estimate has been made on income that could be generated based on the following assumptions:

4.1.1 **WDC staff scheme**

35 staff using pool and gym once a week for 48 weeks	= £5,880
35 staff paying annual joining fee of £25	= £875
Total	= £6,755

4.1.2 **WCC and PCT scheme**

50% uptake of scheme members = 50 WCC and 50 PCT members

100 staff using pool and gym once a week for 48 weeks	= £16,800
100 staff paying annual joining fee of £40	= £4,000
Total	= £20,800

These projections do not allow for the income currently being received from the new members; it will not be possible to monitor to what extent the income from the new scheme actually exceeds that previously paid by new scheme members prior to them joining the scheme

4.1.3 Commercial business scheme

The income generated from the commercial sector is at present unknown. If approval is granted to pursue this option, officers will commence negotiations with local employers to encourage them to support this scheme for the benefit of their employees.

5. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The revisions to the existing WDC Staff Corporate Membership scheme reflect the objectives within the Corporate Strategy for Warwick District Council to be recognized as a good employer. It also sits alongside the objectives of Building on Excellence in supporting staff to do their jobs efficiently and effectively and in marketing its services to increase usage and income.
- 5.2 Consideration of this policy affects a benefit offered to current staff, whether it is taken up or not. All officers have a personal interest as a result, and those who currently take advantage of the scheme have the most significant interest. The potential for conflict has been declared by the senior officers involved in considering this report. The Monitoring Officer does not believe the conflict to be so significant as to preclude the officers concerned from carrying out their normal work in advising the authority on such matters.