

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

17 September 2012

**Report of the Chief Leisure Officer and the
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth & Arts**

Part 1- Public

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken
by the Cabinet Member)**

1 COACHING COURSES – CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Summary

This report reviews the new continuous assessment approach to the Swim School at Larkfield Leisure Centre and Tonbridge Swimming Pool. The report recommends a similar approach is adopted in future to dryside courses at the indoor leisure facilities.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The Board will be aware that the Leisure Services Business Unit introduced a continuous assessment approach to the Swim School at Larkfield Leisure Centre and Tonbridge Swimming Pool in September 2011.
- 1.1.2 The new Swim School operates for 45 weeks per annum with children advancing through the stages as they progress under continuous assessment rather than being assessed at the end of each term.
- 1.1.3 Review of the new Swim School after 12 months of operation shows that income for 2011/12 exceeded the previous year by over £37,000 and total numbers of children attending had increased across both sites by nearly 200 by the year end.
- 1.1.4 The ability to pay by direct debit has also proved popular with over 75% of customers adopting this payment option, allowing parents to spread the cost through the year. The Leisure Services Business Unit is now collecting in excess of £250,000 per annum by direct debit for swimming lessons.

1.2 Courses Co-ordinator

- 1.2.1 The Board will also be aware that the post of Swim School Co-ordinator was created on a temporary basis. The post holder has been very influential in the development of the Swim School in terms of the programme development, management of teaching staff and the crucial role of customer contact.

- 1.2.2 At the recent meeting of General Purposes Committee on 2 July 2012 approval was granted to re-designate the post as Courses Co-ordinator on a permanent basis. Incorporated within the job description are future aspirations to develop a continuous assessment approach to dryside coaching activities.

1.3 Dryside Coaching Schools

- 1.3.1 The range of dryside courses offered at Larkfield Leisure Centre and the Angel Centre include gymnastics, trampolining, football and fencing. Gymnastics is the largest dryside coaching school by a significant margin.
- 1.3.2 A recent survey of parents with children attending gymnastics courses demonstrated that over 75% are interested in the option of continuous assessment. An even greater percentage expressed a desire to pay by direct debit.
- 1.3.3 Early consultation with gymnastic coaching staff suggests that they would be keen to be offered the opportunity of a permanent contract based on annualised hours. This mirrors the approach successfully adopted with swimming teachers.

1.4 Timescale

- 1.4.1 The Leisure Services Business Unit is facing a number of important priorities but it is anticipated that a continuous assessment approach to the gymnastics programme could be adopted from 1 January 2013.
- 1.4.2 In the event this proves successful other dryside activities will be follow in future.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 None.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 It is anticipated that an additional £10,000 per annum net of additional coaching costs would be accrued by adoption of continuous assessment for the gymnastics programme.

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 The Indoor Leisure Operational Risk Register highlights the need to achieve annual financial targets for the facilities and that the result of failure to manage the associated risks could be financial, contractual and professional. The proposals above will assist in reducing the outlined risks by increasing income to the Leisure Services Business Unit.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.9 Policy Considerations

1.9.1 Healthy Lifestyles.

1.10 Recommendations

1.10.1 It is **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that arrangements are progressed to adopt a continuous assessment approach to the gymnastics programme at Larkfield Leisure Centre and the Angel Centre.

The Chief Leisure Officer confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Martin Guyton

Nil

Robert Styles
Chief Leisure Officer

Maria Heslop
Cabinet Member for Leisure, Youth and Arts

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The gymnastics programme at Larkfield Leisure Centre and Angel Centre and access to the facilities is inclusive.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	Yes	The proposals will assist customers in terms of affordability.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.