



EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Environment & Operations
DATE:	08 December 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);

SUBJECT: Increase in fees and charges across Leisure Services

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The costs of operating the Council's three leisure centres has increased significantly in the past 12 months due to the spiralling costs of utilities and inflationary pressures on the cost of goods and services, including equipment, cleaning products and pool chemicals.

The Council reviews fees and charges on an annual basis for those services which can make a charge. Fees and Charges for leisure activities are usually reviewed and increased each year. This report sets out the proposed increases in fees and charges to be implemented with effect from 1 January 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Member:

- Approves the proposed increases in fees and charges for the leisure activities detailed within the report, to be implemented from 1 January 2024.
- Notes that separate meetings will be held with clubs that book the outdoor pitches and athletics facilities to discuss the proposed increases in fees and charges for club bookings.

3. BACKGROUND

The cost of operating the Council's Leisure Centres has increased significantly in the past twelve months. The main budget pressure has arisen due to the spiralling costs of utilities, the centres have also had to contend with inflationary pressures on the cost of goods and services, including equipment, cleaning products and pool chemicals.

The financial pressure on publically operated leisure centres and in particular swimming pools has been recognised by Government. In the 2023 Spring Budget, the Chancellor announced the Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF), making available £20 million support available for public swimming pool providers to alleviate immediate cost pressures by providing revenue support.

The Council did submit a bid to the SPSF for revenue support, but was unsuccessful.

Fees and charges income makes a valuable contribution to the running costs of Leisure services, enabling these important, but non-statutory services, to be sustained and provided.

The Council normally reviews fees and charges on an annual basis and any increases have taken place on 1 January each year for the majority of services.

When considering increases fees and charges for leisure services, we must take into account the elasticity of demand and whether the price of a service results in a reduced demand for it. Whilst the majority of Council services are unaffected by market factors, many leisure activities are price sensitive and the leisure centres operate in a competitive market with a number of other leisure providers across the Borough.

The following increases in fees and charges is proposed for the range of leisure activities listed below:

Activity	2023 Charges	2024 proposed charges	Percentage increase
Casual Swim (adult)	£4.75	£4.95	4.21%
Casual Swim (junior)	£2.90	£3.00	3.45%
Family Swim	£12.80	£13.30	3.91%
Swimming lesson (adult)	£8.00	£8.50	6.25%
Swimming lesson (junior)	£6.30	£6.60	4.76%
Badminton (adult)	£10.60	£11.00	3.77%
Badminton (Junior/60+)	£8.20	£8.50	3.66%
Sports Hall hire, block booking	£41.00	£43.50	6.10%
Sports Hall hire, casual booking	£52.50	£56.00	6.67%
Anytime membership – 12 months	£27.50	£27.50	0.0%
Anytime Flexi – 3 months	£32.95	£32.95	0.0%
Anytime annual – 12 months	£275.00	£275.00	0.0%
Anytime Student flexi – 3 months	£24.50	£20.00	-18.36%
Fitness gym (adult)	£6.85	£7.30	6.57%
Fitness gym (60+)	£3.80	£4.00	5.26%
Fitness classes	£6.85	£7.30	6.57%
Table Tennis (adult)	£6.90	£7.40	7.25%
Table tennis (junior)	£4.20	£4.50	7.14%
Indoor Bowling (adult)	£4.10	£4.30	4.88%
Indoor bowling (60+)	£2.90	£3.00	3.45%

In addition to the aforementioned leisure activities, the Council will continue to provide over 100 hours a week of re:refresh sessions across the three leisure facilities which cost just £1.00 to access. A re:refresh membership card is available free of charge to anyone who lives and/or is educated or employed within the Borough.

Health and Fitness membership fees have not been increased as the majority of memberships are purchased when promotions take place at various times throughout the year. The student membership has been reduced to £20.00 per month to enable us to complete with other fitness operators in the Borough.

The cost of the memberships will continue to be benchmarked against other competitors and other local authorities to ensure that BwD Leisure provides a competitive alternative to other gyms and leisure providers.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The cost of delivering leisure services has increased significantly due to the spiralling cost of utilities and inflationary pressures on goods and services budgets.

The Council normally reviews fees and charges on an annual basis. In recent years, any increases have taken place on 1 January, for the majority of services.

The aforementioned increases in fees and charges should not deter customers for continuing with their chosen leisure activity.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The increase in charges for leisure activities and the additional income generated aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan and the supporting mission to tackle the budget challenge.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The increases in fees and charges for leisure activities will generate an additional £125,000 income in 2024/25 if we can maintain the same level of attendances achieved in 2023/24.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a legal right to increase fees and charges for leisure activities to re-coup some of the costs directly associated with providing this important but non-statutory service.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None – this is an existing service and all resources to deliver the services are in place.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered.

The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

VERSION: 1

CONTACT OFFICER: Joanne Byrne/Martin Eden/Paul Taylor

DATE:	20-11-23
BACKGROUND PAPER:	None.