

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environmental Services (Land & Environmental Services)

Community Safety and Environmental Services Committee: 6 December 2006

Subject: Provision of free swimming for West Dunbartonshire school children during 2006 school holiday periods.

1. Purpose

1.1 To update the Committee on the success of the free swimming initiative for schoolchildren during the school holiday periods in 2006.

2. Background

2.1 The current Leisure Services pricing structure offers free swimming to individuals under 5 years of age and free swimming to concessionary juveniles during weekdays.

2.2 At a meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 26 May 2004, Members agreed to approve implementation of an initiative to offer free swimming to school children in West Dunbartonshire during the school holidays of summer 2004.

2.3 During 2004, the free swimming initiative for schoolchildren was successful in generating over 20,000 free swim visits at Council run leisure facilities. Overall there was an increase of approximately 17% in total numbers of juvenile swims during 2004.

2.4 Following the success of this initiative it has been repeated during school holiday periods in 2005 and 2006.

3. Main Issues

3.1 Free swimming for schoolchildren was provided during the 2006 Easter, summer and October week holidays. Promotion of the initiative was achieved through the leisure web pages and holiday programme publications in an effort to ensure maximum uptake.

3.2 Participation in the free swimming initiative during the 2006 holiday periods at each site was as follows:-

<u>2006</u>	<u>Easter</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>Total</u>
Play Drome	2,316	6,989	698	10,003
Meadow Centre	1,446	5,168	695	7,309
Vale Pool	711	1,806	263	2,780
Total	4,473	13,963	1,656	20,092

3.3 In 2004 and 2005 the initiative was successful in achieving approximately 20,000 free swims each year. The usage figures for 2006 demonstrate that the popularity of the free holiday swimming initiative for school children has been maintained.

4. Personnel Implications

4.1 No additional staff were required to continue to deliver this initiative as the efforts and input of existing employees were utilised to maintain service provision and standards.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The income lost as a result of providing this initiative was contained within the Leisure Services Trading Account for 2006/07.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 It is understood that many participants of the initiative have been encouraged to develop longer-term patterns of use and experience the varied health benefits of participation in physical activity.

6.2 This initiative complements other work which Leisure Services is carrying out to target this age group such as the juvenile fitness club promotion and the various initiatives offered jointly with the Community Safety Partnership.

7. Recommendations

7.1 **The Committee is asked to note the success of the initiative in achieving greater participation in swimming by juveniles in West Dunbartonshire.**

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(Land & Environmental Services)
Date: 7 November 2006

Wards Affected: All

Appendix: None

Background Papers: None

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