

REPORT TO: LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE OF 19 MARCH 2001

REPORT ON: LOCHEE SWIMMING AND LEISURE CENTRE – USE OF POOL BY ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN’S GROUP

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND PARKS

REPORT NO 179-2001

1. **Purpose of Report**

To agree policy in respect of ethnic minority women’s group swimming sessions at Lochee Swimming & Leisure Centre.

2. **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the ethnic minority women’s group swimming session is treated as a private hire and charged accordingly.

3. **Financial Implications**

None

4. **Local Agenda 21 Implications**

None

5. **Equal Opportunity Implications**

The current arrangements promote and encourage women from the ethnic minority population to participate in swimming in an environment which accords to their custom.

6. **Background**

Reference is made to Article XII of the minute of meeting of the Cultural Services Committee of 22 March 1988 of Dundee District Council when the Committee granted exclusive use of the pool hall to encourage swimming activity among ethnic minority groups who required complete privacy. This practice has continued to the present with each member of the group charged an entrance fee based on the Council’s standard session charges appropriate for swimming at Lochee.

It has been brought to the attention of the Director of Leisure & Parks that other groups who use the pool as a private hire pay on the basis of a private hire and not as individual charges. This difference in treatment has given rise to an anomaly. When numbers in attendance reduce in the case of a standard private hire the contribution from each individual would need to increase to cover the cost of the private hire. In the case of the ethnic minority women’s swimming group, as they are paying as individuals there is no variation in cost paid by individuals in relation to attendance during the exclusive-use session.

In order to resolve this anomaly in policy there are a number of options available:

1. The status quo which will potentially disadvantage individual members of other groups and organisations which have arranged a private hire in comparison to the treatment of members of the ethnic minority women's group.
2. Within the ethnic minority women's swimming group session, allow other females access thus creating an open session for women only with the same restrictions in relation to spectator access as exists with the ethnic minority women's group session at the moment. Effectively the situation would not become a block booking but a regular session which would be female only with other access restrictions.
3. Allow all private hire groups to be charged per head. The disadvantage is that this establishes a policy which could be applied for all groups utilising Council Swimming facilities and increases the risk of a pool being booked as a private hire where if only a few people attend there is a substantial loss of income to the Council.
4. Retain the ethnic minority women's swimming group session as a private hire and charge the appropriate organisation accordingly thus bringing all groups within a common policy.

After consultation with the appropriate organisations, Option 4 is recommended as the preferred way forward as it both retains a session for the ethnic minorities including the special conditions such as excluding spectators from the pool area as well as treating all swimming groups and their members on an equitable basis in regard to cost.

7. Consultation

The Chief Executive, Director of Support Services, Director of Finance, and Director of Corporate Planning and Director of Neighbourhood Resources have been consulted.

8. Signed

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Director of Leisure and Parks

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Date