

THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE PUBLISHED ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE

The report overleaf sets out the decision to be taken, the reasons for the decision, and the details of alternative options, if any, considered and rejected. Officer decisions are available for public inspection, both at the Borough Offices and on the Council's website.

Officer decisions are kept for a period of six years at the Borough Offices and for six months on the website after the decision is made. Background papers are available for four years.

RECOMMENDED that:

Two virtual on-demand class memberships are added to the Broxbourne Sport fees and charges.

Purpose

To introduce a virtual on line, on demand exercise class option as part of the leisure service offering to customers.

The Proposal

A project is currently underway to upgrade the leisure smartphone app. As part of the software development there is also an opportunity to offer additional services such as virtual classes which will be delivered in a similar format to the centre based classes albeit that the classes will be delivered virtually. Before the pandemic, virtual on demand classes were increasing in popularity and the national lockdowns have further increased the demand for this type of service. Although these are unlikely to be popular enough to replace instructor led classes entirely, they do offer an effective strategy in appealing to a wider market than site based classes alone.

The Council has been exploring a number of initiatives to modernise the fitness service provided at both the Laura Trott Leisure Centre and the John Warner Sports Centre.

Virtual classes will be added to the timetable and will be available for existing and new members as part of the customer's membership, the price for this will initially be £4.99 a month. It will also be available to non-members at £6.99 per month.

Recent industry predictions suggest virtual at home exercise services will continue to be widely used even after the re-opening of fitness facilities. Expanding the Council's at home service will not only encourage and engage with more cautious customers but also tap into a wider demographic who are seeking a more diverse offering.

Financial, Legal and Risk Management Implications

The cost to the Council for this service is £3.50 per month, per user, with a minimum user amount of 100. Across the two centres it is expected to achieve well above 100 paid users of the service, creating a small revenue stream. No allowance for this income has been included in the 2021/22 estimates.

It is considered that the price is competitive. As the Council is being charged per active user, this also means there is no large initial outlay, as well as resulting in extra revenue and potential to convert non-members onto full leisure memberships.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

This service could be offered to members at no additional cost as part of their membership. Currently 3,538 live members at £3.50 per user would cost the council £12,383.

The service could be offered to members at cost price. However, this would only result in membership retention as a possible gain and not an opportunity to generate revenue.

The Council could offer current members the bolt on option and increase membership prices for new members to include the on line service. This would potentially mean increasing prices as a whole for new members which would increase the cost of the twelve month contract, for all users even those who would not want the virtual class option to either £42.50 or £43.99 (£4.99 extra or cost neutral £3.50 extra).

Contribution to the Council's Objectives and Environmental Sustainability Priorities

- 11 Help residents to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- 15 Maintain a stable financial position.

Conclusion

Offering the digital membership at a cost of £4.99 to members and £6.99 to non-members offers value for money and enhances the service provided to customers.

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Date

Action reported to the Cabinet on:
