

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: Appendix B to this report contains information considered to be exempt under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended

Agenda Item No.

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Sport
DATE: 23 April 2021
SERVICE AREA: Turkish Baths, Harrogate
REPORTING OFFICER: Chris Mason – Manager, Turkish Baths Harrogate
SUBJECT: **Turkish Baths**
WARD/S AFFECTED: ALL DISTRICT
FORWARD PLAN REF: N/A

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from Cabinet Member for the proposed timetable changes for the Turkish Baths.
- 1.2 For Cabinet Member to note the contents of the consultation report at Appendix A which was produced and Appendix B which is a summary of the themes of the free text responses following the undertaking of a consultation exercise in July 2020.
- 1.3 To seek approval from Cabinet Member that the requirement to wear suitable swimwear apply to all sessions including single sex sessions.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That Cabinet member approves the proposed timetable changes and proposed review of the new timetable for the Turkish Baths in relation to single sex sessions as set out in paragraph 5.4 and 5.5 of this report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet Member approves the recommendation that the wearing of suitable swimwear is compulsory in all single sex sessions.
- 2.3 That Cabinet Member notes the contents of the consultation report at Appendix A which was produced and a summary of the themes of free text responses, Appendix B which were collated following the undertaking of a consultation exercise in July 2020.

3.0 RECOMMENDED REASON/S FOR DECISION/S

- 3.1 The proposed timetable changes are more inclusive as they will provide 2 weekly single sex sessions for males and females rather than the current timetable which provides 3 single sex sessions for females and 1 single sex session for males.
- 3.2 Making swimwear compulsory in single sex sessions will (1) promote inclusivity (2) ensure that the Council will meet its equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in delivering services and complying with its Public Sector Equality Duty and (3) enable both male and female Turkish baths attendants to work at both sessions as having to source female or male only staff for a particular single sex sessions can cause operational staffing issues. A change to compulsory swimwear will allow both male and female Turkish bath attendants to work at either of the two single sex sessions.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTION/S CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION *(Must be used for reports to Cabinet & Cabinet Members)*

- 4.1 That the timetable and optional wearing of swimwear in single sex sessions stays in its current form. This is recommended for rejection. The proposed timetable changes will promote further inclusivity. Making the wearing of swimwear compulsory at all single sex sessions will also promote inclusivity, allow the Council to meet its equality obligations under the Equality Act and alleviate staffing issues during single sex sessions.

5.0 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Council is committed that in delivering services to the public it meets its equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with its Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 5.2 In July 2020, a consultation exercise was undertaken in relation to the removal of single sex sessions from the Turkish Baths timetable in order to allow complete accessibility to all genders and to ensure that the Council was meeting its equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The consultation was launched to local residents and subscribers to the Turkish baths newsletters. A wider consultation on site to customers could not be completed as the Turkish Baths were closed due to Covid-19 and societal lockdown. The consultation aimed to capture the opinion of customers on how a change to a fully mixed timetable would support access to all sessions by all customers irrespective of their gender. It also sought to address views on the removal of single sex sessions generally from the timetable. The response was overwhelmingly in favour of retaining single sex sessions. This was due to a variety of reasons which can be found in a summary of the themes of the free text responses, Appendix B.
- 5.3 Considering the overwhelming opinion of the consultees to retain single sex sessions, the officer recommendation is to retain single sex sessions and

cabinet member is requested to approve the changes to the timetable for the reasons set out in paragraph 3 above.

- 5.4 The new timetable will become operational once the Turkish Baths is fully open following the lifting of government restrictions. To ensure that there is no negative commercial impact on the changes in the sessions, it is proposed to add another male session in the daytime and balance the timetable at 2 sessions for each female and male i.e. a daytime and evening session for females only and a daytime and evening session for males only. This will involve removing 1 of the existing female only sessions from the current timetable.
- 5.5 The change in timetables will be reviewed 6 months from when they become operational to ensure that occupancy levels are adequate and that the 2 female only sessions and 2 male only sessions have no negative commercial impact. However, the outcome of this review will not remove single sex sessions, the intention would only be to remove one of the male only or female only sessions or both.

6.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The following were considered: Financial Implications; Human Resources Implications; Legal Implications; ICT Implications; Strategic Property/Asset Management Considerations; Risk Assessment; Equality and Diversity (the Public Sector Equality Duty and impact upon people with protected characteristics). If applicable, the outcomes of any consultations, assessments, considerations and implications considered necessary during preparation of this report are detailed below.
- 6.2 **Legal Implications** – There is no legal requirement to only have mixed sessions to address the Council’s equality obligations in relation to transgender and transsexual individuals.

The Council is a service provider and is required to operate its services in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010. The proposals set out in this report comply with the Council’s equality obligations. It is further recommended that the Council implements a supplementary policy and procedures for accessing Council Leisure Services.

Equality and Diversity implications –Prior to undertaking the consultation exercise, officers prepared and completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), and a copy of the EIA is at Appendix c.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 That the Cabinet Member approves the recommendations to change the Turkish Baths timetable for the sessions detailed within this report and the requirement to wear suitable swimwear apply to all sessions including single sex sessions.

Background Papers – Appendices A & B Consultation report and summary of themes of free text responses. Appendix C, EIA

OFFICER CONTACT: Please contact (Chris Mason, Turkish Baths and Health Spa Manager), if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted on 01423-(500600 ext 58040) or by e-mail – (christopher.mason@harrogate.gov.uk)