

**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Sport Decision meeting

**Date of meeting:** 12 October 2012

**Subject:** Portsmouth City Council Leisure Card

**Report by:** Head of City Development and Cultural Services

**Wards affected:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To update and inform the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport on the usage of the Leisure card over the last 5 years.
- 1.2 To make recommendations for action in 2012/13.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member notes the contents of the report.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet Member agrees to continue to support the Leisure Card within existing budgets.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet Member agrees to the current rationale for the Leisure Card.
- 2.4 That the Cabinet Member agrees to widen non sporting activities expanding the existing scheme and making it more attractive to potential users.

**3. Background**

**Origins and Operation of the card**

- 3.1 The Portsmouth Leisure Card was introduced in June 1998 as a replacement for the previously named Recreation Card which itself evolved as a result of the Poverty Strategy for Portsmouth.

The overwhelming political agreement was to remove the cost barrier to make leisure services more accessible to people on lower incomes. The card enables the least well off residents to access a range of council services.

It is primarily available to residents on means tested benefit and to other secondary groups such as foster carers and asylum seekers.

There are approximately a fifth of the Portsmouth population eligible for a Leisure Card and currently 15% of this percentage take the opportunity to develop a healthier lifestyle.

Applicants can apply for a Leisure Card at a number of centres across the city and the card is valid for 12 months. As the applicants spouse/partner and dependent children under 18 will also be issued with a card, this is an opportunity for the whole family to enjoy new activities together.

The complete list of activities is detailed in Appendix A in the Leisure Card price list. The bulk of activities are related to sport and within sport most activities are related to sports centre activities, swimming/gym as well as golf green discounts. The average discount for most activities is 40%.

### **3.2 Outcomes of the Leisure Card**

City Development and Cultural Services have collaborated with partners across the city to extend the benefits of the card for non sporting activities such as discount at attractions, the Historic Dockyard and Royal Marines Museums, some local business, as well as discounts for sun huts and allotments.

Therefore, the outcomes of this card are diverse and are much more than simply encouraging physical activity. The card is a preventative intervention helping to improve health outcomes for Portsmouth through promoting lifestyle changes and also offers residents the opportunity to become more involved in the cultural life of the city and their community.

The card is linked to the support of the priorities of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) of Portsmouth which has a local priority to:

*“Tackle the detrimental effects of unhealthy weight and lack of physical activity on people’s health and well-being”*

And to:

*“Change the lifestyle behaviours of communities and individuals”.*

In addition to this, the planned Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 will place a requirement on public bodies, when procuring services through public services contracts, to consider how the procurement might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their area. This card is an intervention which will support the local authority in tackling these issues.

### **3.3 Needs assessment**

Sports participation research indicates poverty and inequality are linked to less active lifestyles. A need was identified in Portsmouth 14 years ago for a leisure card to be established, to encourage healthier lifestyles for those on lower incomes. This need is still there today. The 2012 draft JSNA of deprivation states Portsmouth is ranked 76th out of 326 local authorities in England (where 1 is the most deprived) and 22% of all 0-15 year olds live in households dependent on out-of-work benefits.

The JSNA states most deprivation is experienced in Charles Dickens, Paulsgrove, Cosham and St Thomas wards. The post code analysis of the Leisure Card (please refer to Appendix B) shows highest usage in these areas such as Charles Dickens (highest usage) followed by Nelson, Fratton, St.Thomas and Paulsgrove.

Therefore, the post code analysis would indicate that the card is reaching its targeted audience. However, Cosham is identified as a ward which would benefit from a targeted campaign and raising the profile of the card in this area is part of the marketing activities planned.

### **3.4 Leisure Card Numbers**

In the period since its launch the Portsmouth Leisure Card rose to a peak in 2003/4 of over 10,000 users. The pressure on the budget led to the removal of a number of key activities in 2005 and also the discount was reduced by 10%.

In response to this undervaluing of the benefits of the card, numbers declined in 2006/7, but the figures have remained fairly stable since this date; averaging 6,000 per year (please refer to Appendix C).

### **3.5 Budget**

As part of the transfer of recreational facilities to the private sector, the funding for the Leisure Card discount for recreational usage is part of the Parkwood Leisure contract.

In addition to this, the savings programme has impacted on the budget, which has slowly reduced over the years to cover the basic operational costs and recharges of discounted activities.

### **3.6 Usage**

City Development and Cultural Services remain dedicated to the challenges ahead despite the difficult financial climate and will continue to work smarter and ensure services are value for money.

As the service has reduced its overall administration resource as a result of the savings programme, the support available to administer the card has also reduced.

This challenge has led us work smarter, to transform the leisure card processes whilst maintaining the card usage.

Therefore, in January 2012, it was decided to pilot the cancellation of the renewals process on the assumption that the cardholders financial circumstances change quickly and the cardholders may not be eligible for the card the following year. It was felt this change of process may reduce the number of cards but would not reduce the usage to the same degree and six months later this has proved to be the case.

Although there has been a slight decrease in cards as a result of this policy it has not negatively impacted the usage of the card which has remained fairly stable. The recreational usage is an example of this, as despite the introduction of the free swims for under 16's and over 60's, which may appear to make the Leisure Card less attractive, the usage for recreational facilities has remained constant (please refer to Appendix C ).

This process change also produced a budgetary saving which will fund the targeted marketing activities suggested below, to raise awareness of the card to those who are eligible.

### **3.7 Targeted Marketing campaign**

The card requires a higher profile if it is to regain the earlier numbers of 2005/6 and reach those residents that the card was designed to help. The marketing activities planned for this year are detailed below, some of which are already completed.

#### **Increase the Value of the product**

To create value for the customer, the first step in re-valuing the card is to widen the range of discounted activities and to promote new products or services to our existing customers.

In 2012, extra discounted activities were added to widen the benefits for recreational activities in theatres and attractions.

#### **Promotion**

*Web Awareness:* additional web links to the Leisure Card pages are now on relevant web sites and we are working with partners and advisory agencies to promote this further.

*Advisory services:* a direct outreach marketing programme will be developed and the first stage of this is working with the advisory services such as *Advice Portsmouth*, and the *Debt and Benefits Forum* to understand how we can work together and raise the profile of this card.

*Passive marketing techniques:* a simpler application form is in the design stage and posters will to be sent to the issuing centres and other key buildings of public access.

In addition to this, working with our partners in Revenues and Benefits, leaflets will accompany their correspondence early in 2013 and information will be added to the screens in libraries, museums and the Civic Offices reception area.

*Identify target market:* as well as identifying the promotion of our services to current cardholders, there are high numbers of potential eligible users in the Cosham area who are not currently using the leisure card and there will be a targeted approach to raise the profile of the card in this ward.

*Cross marketing management information:* to explore the opportunity to change the application form, in line with data protection principles, to build a database that will be used across all cultural services to encourage a broader demographic to engage with our services. This will be used specifically to contact families to raise awareness of cultural activities and events across the city, many of which are free.

## **Legacy of 2012**

The timing is right to refocus on the leisure card as there is an enthusiasm across the country as people are inspired to take full advantage of the health opportunities available from activities of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Many councils such as Leeds, despite the scale of local authority cuts, are developing the legacy programme further and there are proposals to create an annual Olympic Fund to support affordable access to council sports and leisure centres, based on a scheme which has proven successful in Birmingham.

“A focus of the new strategy would be to offer greater access to sport to those in more deprived areas of the city, and especially to young people, while links between school sports, local community clubs and sports run by volunteers would be strengthened.”

<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/News/Pages/Council-chiefs-to-discuss-golden-London-2012-legacy-for-Leeds.aspx>

The continued development of the leisure card in Portsmouth is key if we are to support the 2012 legacy and encourage more than 15% of eligible residents to apply for a card.

The list of activities should include non sporting activities to encourage residents to be more generally active and involved in the cultural life for the city and is an intervention which should be considered as a long-term, incremental strategy.

## **4. Reasons for recommendations**

- 4.1 The continued development of the leisure card in Portsmouth is one of the many ways to support the legacy for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics' Games.
- 4.2 The Leisure card is one of the tools to remove the cost barrier to make leisure services more accessible to people on lower incomes.

- 4.3 The challenge of helping people to be more active has grown into a major public health issue and the leisure card is a positive intervention that would support the health challenges in the city.
- 4.4 Discontinuing the card would offer a small budget saving but would have detrimental affect on the availability of recreational and cultural activities for over 5,000 residents .The card is a long-term preventative intervention helping to improve health outcomes for Portsmouth.
- 4.5 The card offer residents the opportunity to become participants in the cultural life of the city promoting lifestyle changes and be more involved in the life of their community.

## **5. Equality impact assessment (EIA)**

- 5.1 As this report recommends promotion of the leisure card, this is not a change to policy or service.

## **6. Head of legal, licensing & registrars' comments**

- 6.1 The City Council has power to promote participation in leisure and cultural activities in the manner proposed in this report.
- 6.2 Under Part 2, Section 3 of the City Councils Constitution (responsibilities of the Cabinet) and further in accordance with the Scheme of Delegations at Appendix A to the Executive Procedure Rules in Part 3 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport has authority to approve the recommendations set out in the report.

## **7. Head of Finance's comments**

- 7.1 The 2012/13 budget of £9,685 supports the current level of leisure card activity.

The primary source of PCC leisure card recharges are through golf course usage and sun huts rental which in 2011/12 were;

Golf	£2,990
Sun huts	£580

A targeted 30% increase in the use of the leisure card, as a result of marketing activity, may result in a subsequent increase in recharge costs of £1,071. This amount will be absorbed by the savings realised through more efficient working as detailed in this report.

The budget will be closely monitored and if there is an unprecedented demand the marketing activity will be reduced to ensure the recharges are managed within

the cash limit. The service is also exploring alternative sources of funding support through the EU and Health Care funding streams.

The non PCC concessions are not recharged to PCC and therefore an increase in non PCC activities would not impact on the leisure card budget.

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Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Head of City Development and Cultural Services**

**Appendices:**

- Appendix A           Leisure Card Price List
- Appendix B           Post code analysis of the Leisure Card
- Appendix C           Leisure card figures issued

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
None	

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport on 12 October 2012.

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Signed by:  
**Cabinet member for Culture, Leisure and Sport**

**Leisure Card Price List 2012**


The activities at the following facilities receive a 40% discount unless stated otherwise.

**Mountbatten Centre 9262 6500**

Athletics Track (individual entry fee)  
 Tennis  
 Badminton and Short Tennis  
 Fitness Training 16+  
 Spectators  
 Squash & Racquet Ball  
 Swimming  
 Table Tennis  
 Aerobic Classes  
 Fitball  
 Yoga  
 Spin  
 Step  
 Circuits  
 Body Combat  
 Pilates  
 Trampoline  
 Junior Holiday Activities  
 Junior Play and Pay  
 TOFFS (Single class)

**Eastney Swimming Pool 9273 1786**

Adult Swim / Senior Citizen / Junior Swim

**Pyramids 9279 9977**

Adult Swim / Junior Swim

**Charter Community Sports Centre 9283 8798**
**The Fitness Suite**

Gym sessions  
 Classes  
 Induction Course

**Swimming Pool**

Adult Swim / Senior Citizen / Junior Swim

**Other activities:**

Badminton  
 Aquafit  
 Body Conditioning  
 Boxercise  
 Circuits  
 Low impact circuits

**Aikido (Ken Shin Kai) [www.kenshinkai.org.uk](http://www.kenshinkai.org.uk)**

Discount available on adult joining fee and adult monthly training fee.

**WTF Taekwondo 07554 369197 [www.bts-southampton.co.uk](http://www.bts-southampton.co.uk)**

40% discount available on training fees at Portsmouth clubs.

**Portsmouth Indoor Tennis Centre 9283 0736**

Peak and Off Peak Court hire

**Golf at Great Salterns Golf Course 9266 4549**

40% discount available for Leisure Card holders.

**Wimbledon Park Sports Centre 9282 5075**

Badminton  
 Table Tennis  
 Fitness Training 16+

**Portsmouth Gymnastics Centre 9266 0589**

Pre-school gym tots  
 GYMINIES  
 Recreation Gymnastics  
 Junior Trampoline  
 Adult Gymnastics

**Community Sports Facilities**

Community Sport Facilities offer discounts to Leisure Card holders. For full details, please contact the Centres.

Fratton Community Centre 9275 1441  
 Highbury College 9232 8690  
 Paulsgrove Community Centre 9238 7741

**Tennis 9282 4693**

Grass courts at Canoe Lake  
 Hard courts at Canoe Lake and Southsea



## Leisure Card Price List 2012



### **Bowls**

Milton Park, Alexandra Park, Canoe Lake, College Park, Cosham Park, Drayton Park, Pembroke Gardens, Swordsands

### **Allotments / Huts** 9283 4171

40% discount on the **full** adult rate

### **Sun Huts** 9282 8112

40% discount available to Leisure Card holders. Maximum hire of 2 weeks in any calendar year.

### **Arts** 9283 4171

The Arts Service organise shows throughout the year. Please contact above number for details.

### **Southsea Skatepark** 9229 5360

Southsea Skatepark offer discounts to Leisure Card holders. Full details available at: [www.southseaskatepark.com](http://www.southseaskatepark.com) plus information available on Facebook and Twitter.

### **Portsmouth Historic Dockyard** 9283 9766

Visit Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and receive a 50% discount off an adult, child or senior ticket by showing your Portsmouth Leisure Card.

Visit HMS Victory, HMS Warrior 1860, Mary Rose Museum\*, National Museum of the Royal Navy, Action Stations and board a Harbour Tour.

Tickets are valid for one year.  
 \*Entry to the current Mary Rose Museum is valid until 30 September 2012.

### **Royal Marines Museum** 9281 9385

50% discount is available with a Portsmouth Leisure Card.

### **Blue Reef Aquarium** 9287 5222

Discounts are available with a Portsmouth Leisure Card.

### **Local Business** 9269 8285

Alexandra Sports  
 140 Gladys Avenue  
 North End  
 Portsmouth

Discounts available (not sale items)

### **Tongues and Grooves** (Poetry and Music Club)

Discount available on all creative writing workshops.

More information is available on:  
[www.tongues-and-grooves.org.uk](http://www.tongues-and-grooves.org.uk)

### **Special Collections** 9283 4092

Residents who hold a Leisure Card can receive a free Special Collection if they are in receipt of specified social benefits on the collection date.

A limited number of free collections is available and there may be a waiting period.

### **Portsmouth Guided Walks** 9282 6722

Special discount price to Leisure Card holders of £1 per person.

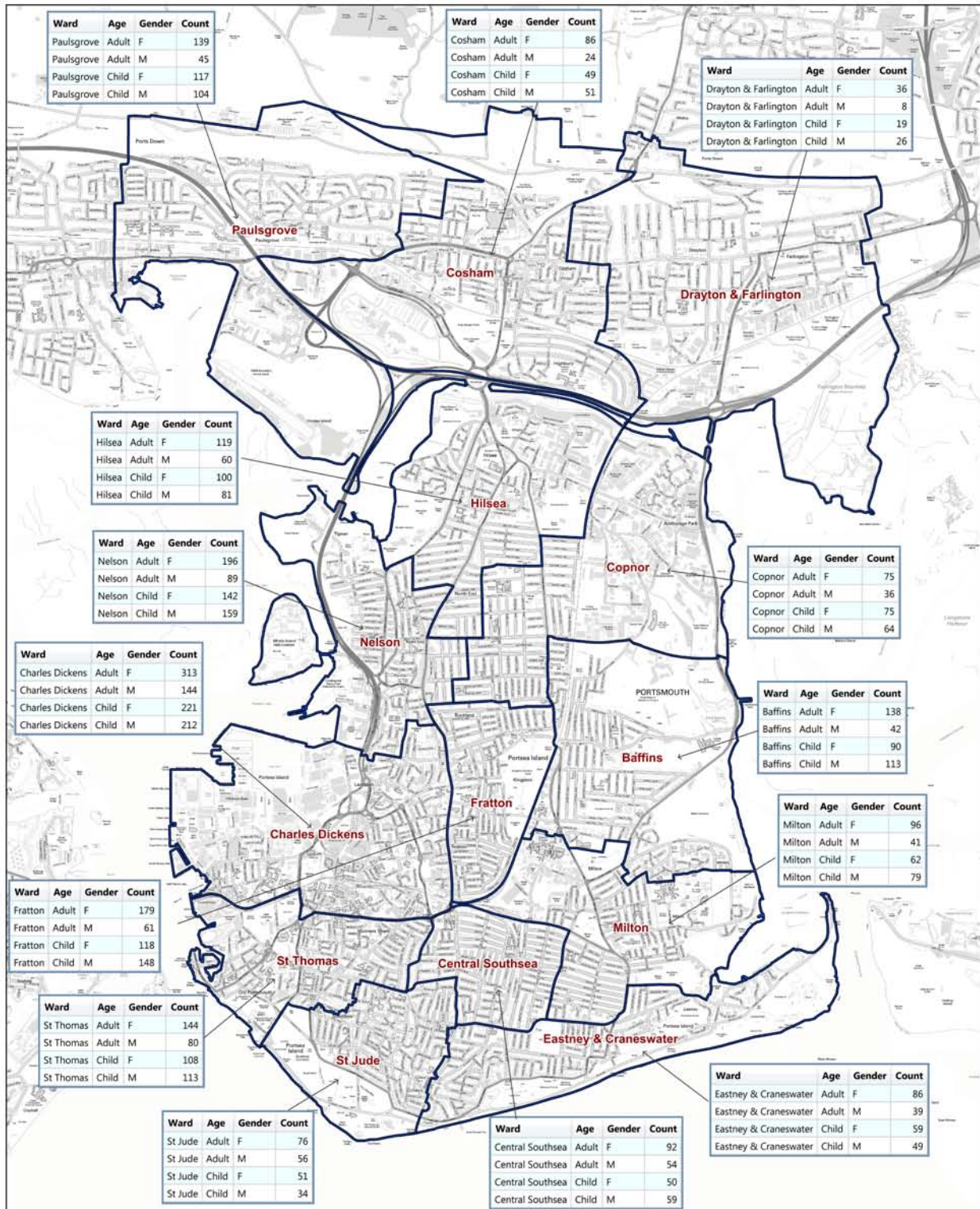
Please ensure you bring along your current Leisure Card. For details, ring the above number.

**All Discounts and Activities  
 are Subject to Change**

Amended 3 August 2012



Appendix B



Title: Leisure Card Demographics Breakdown Participation

Prepared for: Portsmouth City Council  
Prepared by: Geographic Information Service

Scale: 1:30000

Date: 14/09/2012



Appendix C

