



Report of the Director of Children's Services and Director of Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 11th April 2012

Subject: **Response to the Full Council Deputation by the Leeds Children's Mayor
Joe Smith: 'When it comes to keeping Kidz active – Leeds Leads!!'**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides a response to the deputation presented to Full Council on 18th January 2011, entitled 'When It Comes To Keeping Kidz Active - Leeds Leads !!' The report was presented by Joe Smith, the winner of the Leeds Children's Mayor competition. The competition involved writing a 'manifesto' on an important issue for children and young people in Leeds, to help make the city more 'child friendly', with the winning entry being presented to Full Council in the form of a deputation.
2. The full deputation is attached at appendix 1. It highlights the importance of children and young people in Leeds staying healthy and the key role that public gyms can play in this. Specifically the report calls for 'Kidz Zones' in every public gym across the city. Kidz Zones would provide junior gym equipment that young people can use, with support, to help them stay fit.
3. Officers have given consideration to Joe's proposals and have looked carefully at the opportunities, viability and costs associated with implementing it. The deputation has highlighted how strongly young people feel about opportunities to stay healthy, and in the context of the Olympic year and our wider ambitions to make Leeds a Child Friendly City, the Council is very keen to develop and promote such opportunities.
4. Whilst the specific suggestion of Kidz Zones is not something that would be right for every gym in Leeds at the current time, further work will be done to review how 'child friendly' our public gyms are at present across the city and what opportunities there are to improve this. We will report back to Joe on this.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended to Executive Board that:

- (i) A letter is written to Joe Smith on behalf of the Board, thanking him for highlighting this important issue, congratulating him on winning the Leeds Children's Mayor competition and inviting him to meet with the key officers involved in managing leisure services.
- (ii) That, building on the many positive arrangements already in place, the Board affirm their commitment to making all Leeds public leisure facilities as 'child friendly' as possible, through a variety of means and in consultation with children and young people.
- (iii) That officers continue to review opportunities to introduce initiatives that get Leeds children and young people involved with Leeds leisure centres and that further contact is made with Joe before the end of 2012 updating him on progress and developments.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides a response to the deputation presented to Full Council on 18th January 2011, entitled 'When It Comes To Keeping Kidz Active - Leeds Leads !!' The report was presented by Joe Smith, the winner of the Leeds Children's Mayor competition. The competition involved writing a 'manifesto' on an important issue for children and young people in Leeds, with the winning entry being presented to Full Council in the form of a deputation.

2.0 Background information

Background about the Leeds Children's Mayor Competition

- 2.1 The Leeds Children's Mayor Programme (formally known as "Mayor for a Day") is a local democracy awareness campaign that has taken place in Leeds since 2003. The programme is organised and delivered by a partnership of staff from both Democratic Services and Children's Services.
- 2.2 The aim of the programme is to actively engage young people in democratic systems as this is the key to establishing long term democratic involvement for our city. It is an opportunity for schools to encourage and support pupils to be aspirational and recognise that their actions can influence change.
- 2.3 The theme for this years manifestos was around the Leeds' aspiration to become a 'Child Friendly City'. Pupils submitted their campaign pack (which included the candidates photograph, consent form, their manifesto and a poster promoting their campaign) in order to be short-listed for the final voting stage. The entries were narrowed down to a final ten by a panel of City Councillors and Youth Councillors who used set criteria to complete a short-listing process.
- 2.4 The ten finalists had their campaign packs uploaded to the "Children's Mayor Portal" on Leeds Learning Network for a two week voting period. For the first time this year the campaigns were also uploaded to the cities "Breeze Leeds" to enable the wider public to vote. In total, 3316 votes were cast representing an increase of 28% on the previous year.
- 2.5 The final ten candidates were invited to the Civic Hall in November to have tea with the Lord Mayor, and receive a commemorative certificate. The winner was announced as Joe Smith from Strawberry Fields Primary School. Joe then participated in the Christmas Lights Switch On with celebrities from the music and entertainment world. Joe's manifesto is about keeping children active by creating gyms for children or enabling children to access adult gyms.

Wider Background Information

- 2.6 'Children and young people choosing healthy lifestyles' is one of the five outcomes highlighted in Leeds' Children and Young People's Plan for 2011-15. In this way it is a key part of our ambitions to make Leeds a child friendly city. The city already offers young people a wide variety of opportunities to take part in sport, exercise and other initiatives that promote healthy lifestyles and we are keen to build on this,

particularly in the Olympic year. Leeds schools play a key role in this and there is good support in place for schools to participate in school games and, at the current time in the Spirit Alive initiative that links closely with the Olympics.

- 2.7 Across our provision we are mindful of the need to provide children and young people with a wide range of different initiatives, recognising that there will be many different preferences about the best way to get exercise and live healthy lifestyles. Leeds leisure centres provide a variety of activities to help children and young people stay healthy and these have proven popular. In 2010/11, junior visits constituted 31.4% of the total number of visits to our leisure facilities. The table attached at appendix 2 provides a more detailed breakdown of this.
- 2.8 There are also many other activities made available through leisure services that promote healthy lifestyles and these include:
- Significant subsidy to enable young people to access leisure centres
 - Positive Futures for those in difficult circumstances, including the national Inspiring Individual Award and the Lennox Lewis Boxing Academy.
 - Subsidised elite training in swimming, diving and gymnastics; with some young people gaining international recognition and winning many medals.
 - Leeds Disability Youth Sports Panel and related projects in wheelchair racing and tennis coaching, adapted dinghies and bicycles.
 - West Yorkshire Youth games.
 - Leeds Sport Volunteer Fair helped encourage more volunteers to help with young people's sport in the city.
 - Community Sport events across Leeds, particularly the free community multi-sport summer camps supported by Inner east area committee and the West Leeds Coaching Scholarship.
 - The Refugee World Cup included talent scouting for the 16-24 age group.
- 2.8 Price is a key consideration in enabling young people to access Leeds public gyms, Junior membership cards for young people aged up to 19, now cost £15.40 per month, offering wide access (depending on age) to gyms, pools and appropriate fitness classes. This card has proven very popular, with numbers rising 433% from 203 in March 2008 to 1,084 in December 2011. Young people have all day access to leisure facilities which proves particularly popular during school holidays. This includes access across 14 sites to the gyms, swimming, fitness classes and a climbing wall. There were over 100,000 junior visits to the gyms alone in 2010/11. For those who do not wish to commit to membership, the Breeze card provides access to off-peak gym sessions for £2.20 and swims for £1.70.

3.0 Main issues

Kidz Zones in Leeds Public Gyms

- 3.1 Officers have reviewed the prevalence of and arrangements for Kidz Zone gyms in other local authorities. There are some examples of this being implemented in some gyms across the country, where this is the case it is usually where new gyms are built and where particular funding streams have been offered up specifically for young people, for example from the PCT. The conversion of existing gyms appears to happen less often, potentially because of the cost and/or income loss

implications (e.g. if this results in a reduced offer to adults). Based on previous experiences, our current approach in Leeds is to favour integrating children and young people's gym access into mainstream hours, which has already helped encourage a large increase in use. If we continue with this approach in our existing gyms then our key challenge is to make the gyms as children and young people friendly as possible, so that young people feel comfortable and welcome using the facilities alongside adults.

3.2 There are other issues to consider in working to make our gyms more child friendly:

- Health and safety – Inductions are essential and staff supervision of a gym (which carries a cost) helps avoid the use of equipment that is too demanding and improve the management of child protection risks. In the case of most of the 'Kidz Zone' style gyms identified elsewhere these are for use at bookable sessions only, to ensure that they are staffed.
- The appropriateness of equipment for the range of ages/sizes of children who may wish to use it - For example if we do introduce Kidz Zones (and within our existing arrangements) we may need different sets of equipment for under 11's to that for teenagers.
- Cost - At present we have 1,084 junior members at £15.40 a month (net income c£160,000 a year). Any moves towards increasing access by reducing the cost of membership would have an impact on this income. Alternatively the extra cost/targeted activity could be commissioned.

4.0 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The Leeds Children's Mayor competition was itself a valuable opportunity to consult with children and young people and gather a range of views about how to improve the city. In taking forward our ambitions to make our leisure facilities as child friendly as possible it will be important to gather the views of children and young people and in particular we will ensure that Joe Smith is informed of progress in this area.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

1.1.1 There are no specific considerations under this heading.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 Leeds has set out a clear ambition to become the best city for children and young people to grow up in. This is underpinned by the outcomes and priorities in the city's Children and Young People's Plan, including that children and young people choose healthy lifestyles. The winning manifesto from the Leeds Children's Mayor supports these ambitions and provides further impetus to focus on improving outcomes in this area.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

- 4.4.1 As part of our child friendly city ambitions there is a real opportunity to further increase children and young people's access to Leeds leisure facilities. This has to be done in a way that recognises and balances with the financial benefits realised through existing gym arrangements. For example, adult gym stations produce an average annual income of £4,500 per station from membership and casual income. Where adult equipment would need to be removed to make space for specific children and young people's equipment (with low cost or no cost access) this would therefore have a potentially significant impact on income, though the extent to which would depend on the gym chosen and if we could economically use displaced equipment. Other considerations if Kidz Zones were introduced in public gyms would be a potential restriction on adult hours, which would also affect income, particularly since the 'use profile' has flattened over more of the day, compared to the old evening peak. Leeds public gyms each earn about £75 per hour of opening on average.
- 4.4.2 Where other local authorities have introduced the equivalent of 'Kidz Zone' gyms external or ear-marked funding has been behind nearly all of these initiatives. There may be opportunities to explore Kidz Zone areas that do not have a significant impact on revenue in more detail as we move forward, where the right centres can be identified i.e. those that do not require segregation\separate sessions or even lower prices for children and young people. In exploring this further it would be advisable to explore potential partnership (e.g. NHS), or sponsorship funding for the capital and equipment costs.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no specific considerations under this heading.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.5.2 There are no specific considerations under this heading.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Children's Mayor for Leeds competition provides a valuable opportunity for children and young people across the city to consider and highlight issues that are particularly important to them. Joe Smith's winning manifesto highlights the importance of providing safe, accessible places for children and young people to improve their health. In the context of our child friendly city ambitions and the Olympic year there is a chance to further develop the positive initiatives that Leeds public leisure centres already have in place for children and young people. In ensuring that this is done we will stay in contact with Joe to highlight how we have responded to his proposals.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended to Executive Board that:

- (i) A letter is written to Joe Smith on behalf of the Board, thanking him for highlighting this important issue, congratulating him on winning the Leeds Children's Mayor competition and inviting him to meet with the key officers involved in managing leisure services.
- (ii) That, building on the many positive arrangements already in place, the Board affirm their commitment to making all Leeds public leisure facilities as 'child friendly' as possible, through a variety of means and in consultation with children and young people.
- (iii) That officers continue to review opportunities to introduce initiatives that get Leeds children and young people involved with Leeds leisure centres and that further contact is made with Joe before the end of 2012 updating him on progress and developments.

7.0 Background documents 1

6.1 There are no background papers for this report.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.

Appendix 1:

Name: Joe Smith
School: Strawberry Fields Primary School
Slogan: When It Comes To Keeping Kidz Active - Leeds Leads !!

If I was children's mayor of Leeds I would like the opportunity to work with other children to improve their health, fitness and self confidence. I would do this by developing a Kidz Zone in each public gym in Leeds. It would be a place where kids could go to get fit and also have fun and spend time with their friends. They might even make some new ones!

Each Kidz Zone would be installed with exactly the same equipment as the adult's gym [treadmills, rowing machines.etc] but smaller and specially built for the children and would have interactive games built in to make keeping fit more fun.

Each Kidz Zone would have at least one personal trainer to supervise. The personal trainer's job would be to set up sessions, exercises, circuits and challenges for the kids to complete or have a go at. They would also talk about the benefits of having a healthy lifestyle.

Each Kidz Zone would also have a TV or music station/stereo so the kids could also watch TV or listen to music while doing their exercises.

I know there will be a cost to buy equipment and run Kidz Zone but in the long run, the benefits will be;

- Improved Fitness Levels for kids
- Less kids being overweight
- Improved self confidence for the kids that visit Kidz Zone
- Parents will know where their kids are
- Less money spent in hospital on unhealthy children
- Introducing kids to the positives of exercise
- Parents being able to exercise and keep fit at the same time.

I think it would be money well spent.

'When It Comes To Keeping Kidz Active – Leeds Leads !!'

Appendix 2:

What we currently do for young people in council gyms in Leeds

**Leeds City Council
Council Leisure Centres 2010/11
Participation by Juniors**

	Junior Total
Junior Swims	178,714
Under 5 Free Swims	53,922
Holiday Wet & Wild	25,261
School swims	227,619
Swim Training E group	15,767
Junior Swim Lessons	322,469
Family swims (half)	11,640
Junior Hall/Pool/Pitch hire	145,911
Gym-minis	32,270
Trampolining Course - Juniors	5,502
Striker Football Coaching	26,571
Childrens Parties	36,329
Schools Dry Use	48,553
Holiday clubs	35,968
Junior Tennis Courses	6,737
Junior Bodyline Courses	2,282
Junior Bodyline Gym visits	107,657
<i>Other activities</i>	<u>36,222</u>
All junior visits	<u>1,319,394</u>
Total visits	4,199,160
Proportion	31.4%