



REVIEW OF THE PASSPORT FOR LEISURE and OVER 65's SCHEME.

At the January 2017 meeting of the Arts Culture and Recreation SPC the proposal to increase the charges under the Passport for Leisure scheme was amended to allow for the charges to be increased by 50% of the proposed amount immediately and the deferred amount to increase from the 1st January 2018 subject to a report to SPC reviewing the scheme.

There is a cost associated with providing any service - free of charge or at a subsidised rate. Due to the popularity and demand with the Passport for Leisure Scheme and the OAP membership there are operational costs such as maintenance, refurbishment, heating, water, electricity, along with health and safety and risk which need to be addressed. The facilities only generate a very small percentage of the potential income from this cohort of people which restricts the ability of the centre managers to sustain maintain and improve the facilities standards. Dublin City Council acknowledge the importance of providing a subsidised quality service which is vital for vulnerable groups. This is the reason we are providing a number of subsidised services to children, unemployed, Passport for Leisure and OAP's. We want to ensure that people who live or work in Dublin City have access to quality sports and recreational services. To ensure the subsidies and the quality of the services continue and are sustainable at a reasonable price, the schemes are being reviewed.

In 2007 the then Lord Mayor Vincent Jackson established the Passport for Leisure Scheme. The scheme was a special initiative which offered over 55's free use of Dublin City Council Sport and Fitness facilities with significant time restrictions (7 am to 10 am). The scheme was extended to offer discounts on a range of cultural, travel, health and recreational activities offered by other providers/business's (average discount is 10%).

Limelight Communications were appointed in 2007 as project managers of the scheme. Limelight Communications engaged with Countdown, who provide the discount cards for the scheme (cards cost €10). Limelight has advised Dublin City Council Sport and Recreation Section, they are not in a position to supply detailed information in relation to the Passport for Leisure Scheme e.g. ratio of males to females, frequency of use or most popular attractions etc, as the card does not incorporate swipe technology and does not retain information on the services the member is purchasing.

When the Passport for Leisure scheme was introduced in Dublin City Council there were no restrictions in relation to people living outside the city administrative area availing of the scheme.

It was proposed that the scheme would be available in the adjoining local authorities and discussions took place in relation to this. None of the adjoining local authorities nor any other local authority have participated in the scheme to date.

The table below shows how many Passport for leisure members visited the Dublin City Council Sports and Fitness Facilities from 2007 until 2011. This time frame was identified because other than the passport for leisure membership fee of €10, which was paid to Limelight, there was no cost to access the Sports and Fitness facilities. The table also shows the cost (loss of income) to Dublin City Council of the Passport for Leisure scheme based on the number of visits multiplied by the pay as you go rate.

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total Attendance
Attendance prior to charge	2,371	13,861	24,399	29,943	26,921	97,495
Subsidy provided by Dublin City Council	€16,597	€97,027	€170,793	€209,601	€188,447	€682,465

* The table above shows the number of **visits** to the Sport and Fitness centres by Passport for Leisure members between the years 2007 and 2011. The subsidy is determined by the number of visits multiplied by the Adult Pay As You Go rate of €7.

The Sport and Fitness facilities are continuously striving to provide a better service, increase usage levels and reduce the net operational costs to the City Council. The larger Sport and Fitness facilities such as Markievicz, Ballymun, Finglas and Ballyfermot currently cost approximately €1.2million each, per year, to operate and generate an income of €700,000 - €750,000 per year. The operation of the Passport for Leisure Scheme and the Senior Citizens schemes have a significant impact on the revenue generated for each facility in the Sport and Recreation Section. In January 2013 Dublin City Council Sport and Recreation Section introduced a charge to use the Sport and Fitness facilities for Passport for Leisure members and removed the time restriction to attend. The charge was €2 pay as you go, €10 monthly membership and €100 for annual membership. The introduction of the charge resulted in a decrease in attendance initially but the Passport for Leisure Scheme now shows a steady increase in the number of individuals availing of this service.

In 2014 the Department of Finance introduced some changes in legislation and the Sport and Fitness Sector are now subject to VAT. The Sport and Recreation Section increased the cost of the Passport for Leisure Scheme to cover the cost of VAT. The new charge was €2.20 pay as you go, €11 monthly membership and €110 for annual membership. The increase in the cost at this stage did not affect the attendance figures availing of the scheme and the numbers continue to increase.

The table below shows the number of visitors and the income generated from the Passport for Leisure Scheme from 2013 to 2016.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Number of Pay As you go	9,867	12,287	13,939	10,902	36,093
Pay As You Go Income	€18,500	€23,110	€27,890	€22,565	€92,065
Dublin City Council Subsidy	€50,569	€62,899	€69,683	€59,200	€242,351
Number of Monthly Membership	3,022	2,917	3,839	3,749	13,527
Monthly membership income	€30,226	€29,175	€38,394	€37,492	€135,287
Dublin City Council Subsidy	€60,434	€58,335	€76,776	€74,978	€270,523
Number of Annually membership	383	372	479	571	1805
Annual membership income	€38,305	€37,206	€47,994	€57,165	€180,670
Dublin City Council Subsidy	€76,212	€74,022	€95,227	€113,564	€359,025

* The Subsidy is calculated by attendance numbers multiplied by the normal Adult entry fee or membership for that year minus the actual income figure for each year. Price for pay as you go was €7, with the exception of 2016 which increased to €7.50. Price for monthly membership is €30 and price for annual membership is €299.

Currently, Passport for Leisure **members** (not including pay as you go) in the Sport and Fitness facilities represent 14% of the membership across all the facilities.

Dublin City Council estimates that to date the Sports and Recreation Facilities subsidised the Passport for Leisure Scheme to the value of over €1,500,000.

Proposals for the Passport for Leisure Scheme:

1. From **1st January 2018** it is intended to introduce a new membership scheme for people over **60** years of age that will be directly managed by Dublin City Council replacing the existing Passport for Leisure scheme. The new scheme will remove the initial membership fee of €10 which Limelight is currently charging.
2. **Annual Membership:** This new membership will be available at a 50% discount to the normal annual membership fee which will result in an increase cost from €130 to €150 (Nett increase is actually €10 – as €10 membership / Passport for Leisure card fee no longer applicable). Classes in the Sport and Fitness Centres are not included in the scheme. The over **60's** membership will be set at 50% of the standard annual membership going forward.
3. **Monthly Membership:** This new membership will be available at a 50% discount to the normal monthly membership fee which will result in an increase cost from €13 to €15 (Nett annualised increase is €24 less €10 membership card = €14). Classes in the Sport and Fitness Centres are not included in the scheme. The over **60's** membership will be set at 50% of the standard monthly membership going forward.
4. **Pay As You Go:** The over **60's** membership will be set at 50% of the normal pay as you go membership fee which will result in an increase cost from €2.75 to €3.50. Classes in the Sport and Fitness Centres are not included in the scheme. The over **60's** membership will be set at 50% of the standard pay as you go membership going forward.

5. **The age requirement** for availing of the Passport for Leisure Scheme will be raised to 60 years of age from 1st January 2018 for all **NEW** applicants. However **ALL EXISTING** Passport for Leisure members of the facilities on **31 December 2017** will continue to be eligible to avail of the terms of the scheme regardless of age and will not be affected by the proposed price increase until **2019**.

6. The Passport for Leisure Scheme will only be available to individuals who can provide proof of address of living or working in the Dublin City Council administrative area.

CURRENT PASSPORT FOR LEISURE	PROPOSED COST TO THE OVER 60 SCHEME
Cabra Parkside, St Catherine's, Irishtown and Ballybough are:	
€2.00 PAYG	€2.50
€8.00 Monthly	€10.00
€77.50 Annual	€100.00
Coolock, Crumlin & Sean Mc Dermott Street Pools:	
€2.20 PAYG	€2.50
Ballyfermot, Ballymun, Finglas, Markievicz, SWAN Sport & Fitness Centres:	
€2.75 PAYG	€3.50
€13.00 Monthly	€15.00
€130.00 Annual	€150.00

* The table above outlines the Passport for Leisure current pricing structure & the proposed pricing structure. Please note the initial Joining fee of €10 which is paid to Limelight would be discontinued. This is in line with the proposal to the SPC in January

The above proposed prices from 1st January 2018 relate to all new members over 60. The existing members will not pay the increased prices until 1st January 2019.

OLD AGE PENSIONERS (OVER 65) REVIEW

Persons over the age of 65 access the Sport and Fitness facilities free of charge to use the swimming pools and / or gyms (classes not included) without any time restrictions. Historically this was introduced in the late 1960's / early 1970's when the City Council only provided swimming pools. Following on from some research it was identified that other local authority's Sport and Fitness facilities offer membership at a reduced rate for old age pensioners (over 65). It is not evident that any other Sport and Fitness facility offer any individual or group access to facilities free of charge.

- Dún Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council manage a number of facilities offering membership at €360 while OAP's can join for annual membership set at €280

- Kildare County Council - K Leisure also manage a number of facilities, their annual membership is €495 and their Golden years (60 and over) can join for €395.

- South Dublin County Council offer annual membership at €439 and offer membership to over 55's at €349

The table below shows the amount of OAP / over 65's visits to Dublin City Council Sports and Fitness Facilities in 2015 and 2016. The Sport and Fitness facilities that are included in the table are the most popular centres used by the OAP's as they have both gym and swimming pools included. The table also indicates the subsidy that Dublin City Council provides by offering the service free of charge to Old Age Pensioners.

Sport and Fitness facility	2015	2016
Ballyfermott Sport and Fitness	20,548	24,984
Markievicz Sport and Fitness	9,955	Closed for refurbishment
Irishtown Sport and Fitness	1,469	1217
Finglas Sport and Fitness	8,752	12,922
Ballymun Sport and Fitness	5,930	3,676
Total number of visits	46,654	42,799
Dublin City Council Subsidy	€349,905.00	€320,992.50

*The subsidy is calculated by the number of visits to the facilities multiplied by the adult pay as you go rate of €7.50.

Proposals for the OAP Scheme:

1. From the 1st of January 2018 it is proposed to introduce a membership joining fee of €20 per OAP/Over 65's per year. This will entitle OAP's to use the Gym and/or the Swimming pool in the Sport and Fitness centres. The hours of access will also be changed to limit free use of the facility from Monday to Friday and only between the hours of 9 am and 6 pm.
2. As part of the management of this scheme from January 2018 it is proposed to introduce a membership card for each centre which will be issued to the OAP which will ensure that their attendance is recorded and is managed in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. I.D. and proof of age will be requested prior to issuing a membership card.
3. **ALL** existing OAP/Over 65's members will have their membership renewed upon payment of the annual fee of €20.
4. However **ONLY** new members who live or work within the Dublin City Council Administrative Area will be offered the €20 annual membership.

Regardless of age, where you live or work all visitors are welcome to avail of the facilities at the very reasonable non subsidised rates which our customers currently pay.

Jim Beggan,
Senior Executive Officer