

**TO: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, CORPORATE SERVICES AND
PUBLIC PROTECTION
22 February 2016**

**LEISURE SAVER SCHEME
Director of Environment Culture and Communities**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to gain Executive Member approval for an amendment to the qualifying criteria for the Leisure Saver Scheme in light of the recent introduction of Universal Credit in Bracknell Forest

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1. **That the Executive Member approves the addition of Universal Credit as a qualifying criteria for the Leisure Saver Scheme**
- 2.2. **That delegated authority be given to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection to implement any future amendments to the Leisure Saver Scheme.**

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1. In September 2015 Universal Credit was introduced in Bracknell Forest for new benefit claimants instead of a number of individual means tested benefits. In due course the existing benefits will be phased out and all claimants will receive Universal Credit. In order to join of the Leisure Saver Scheme, prospective members must currently be in receipt of one or more of the identified means tested benefits. As these are phased out it is recommended that prospective members of the scheme need to be in receipt of their replacement which is Universal Credit.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. The Leisure Saver Scheme provides valuable opportunities to financially disadvantaged families. In order to maintain the scheme other options are not considered viable at this time.

5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1. There are many reports identifying the link between low income, lack of physical activity and poor health. The Leisure Saver Scheme offers significant discounts at Bracknell Forest Council owned and managed Leisure Facilities to financially disadvantaged families that are resident in Bracknell Forest. Discounts of up to 70% are available on a range of activities at certain times. To qualify for the Leisure Saver Scheme, prospective members are required to be in receipt of one or more clearly identified means tested benefits. The scheme is delivered through the e+ card and is renewable annually. Full details of the application process and the qualifying criteria for the Leisure Saver Scheme are attached as appendix A.

Unrestricted

- 5.2. The Leisure Saver Scheme has made an important contribution to the Council's Medium Term Objectives and will make an important contribution to the Council Plan 2015 – 2019. In particular it will contribute to the Key Strategic Theme "People Live Active & Healthy Lifestyles"
- 5.3. At the end of October 2015 there were 530 members enrolled on the Leisure Saver Scheme. There were 374 adults and 156 children. In the financial year 2014/15 there were 5360 attendance at leisure facilities by members of the scheme.
- 5.4. In September 2015 Universal credit was introduced into Bracknell Forest for the first time. Initially Universal credit was available to new benefit claimants and existing benefit claimants whose circumstances have changed. Claimants on the existing benefits remain as they are for the time being, although it is anticipated that all benefit claimants in Bracknell Forest will have been moved onto Universal Credit by the end of 2017.
- 5.5. The change to Universal Credit will impact on the Leisure Saver Scheme as the existing qualifying criteria will gradually be phased out. However there does not appear to be any great difference between the number of families eligible for the existing benefits and those that will eventually be claiming Universal Credit. It will be a fairly straightforward transition from the existing qualifying criteria to the new ones. Initially families who meet the existing criteria will continue to be accepted for the Leisure Saver Scheme on production of the appropriate documentation and signing up for an e+ card. New claimants of Universal Credit will also be able to sign up for the Leisure Saver Scheme, but on production of their Secretary of State letter that confirms their eligibility for Universal Credit. As the existing benefits are phased out there will be a gradual change until all prospective members are in receipt of the Universal Credit.
- 5.6. All other terms and conditions of the Leisure Saver Scheme remain the same, but with the proviso that Officers periodically review the scheme to see what the impact, if any, there has been from the change to Universal Credit.

6. ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1. There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2. Since it is not anticipated that there will be any change to the number of families that are eligible for the Leisure Saver Scheme there will no significant financial implications as a result of this change.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for Leisure facility management and sports development.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 This scheme has been in operation for many years and the risks associated with the transfer to a simplified benefits system is regarded as manageable.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Principal Groups Consulted

None.

7.2 Method of Consultation

Not applicable.

7.3 Representations Received

Not applicable.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

Chris Vaal ECC - 01344 354108

Chris.vaal@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

APPLICATION FORM

SURNAME:

FIRST NAME:

ADDRESS:

..... POSTCODE:

PHONE NO: DDB:

EMAIL:

Information contained in this form is personal data which will be held on computer and is therefore subject to the Data Protection Act 1998.
 From time to time you may be sent Leisure Section Publicity. If you do not wish to receive publicity about Leisure Section activities and events please tick the box
 I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the Leisure Saver Scheme.

Signed (parent/guardian if under 18):

Print Name (parent/guardian if under 18):

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date issued:

Issued by:

Proof of entitlement Proof of address

e+ card number:



Leisure Saver Scheme



www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/be

Be Fulfilled...



© Bracknell Forest Council 2014

What is the Leisure Saver Scheme

The Leisure Saver Scheme is free to join and offers an average of 70% off the cost of specified activities at specified times at Bracknell Leisure Centre, Edgbarrow Sports Centre, Sandhurst Sports Centre and Downshire Golf Complex.

Full details of the discounts offered on the scheme are available from the Individual facilities involved in the scheme.

In order to qualify for the Leisure Saver Scheme applicants must live in the borough of Bracknell Forest and be in receipt of one or more of the following:

- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credits
- Income Support
- Job Seeker's Allowance (Income based)
- Employment & Support Allowance (Income based)

Dependents of applicants are also eligible for the scheme if they permanently live at the same address.

How do I apply for the scheme?

Joining the Leisure Saver Scheme could not be easier. To start making savings at some of the Borough's premier leisure facilities simply:

- Have an e+ card. If you do not already have an e+ card then you should get one before joining the Leisure Saver Scheme. e+ card application forms are available at all of the participating facilities and local libraries. Once you have an e+ card, take proof you are a borough resident AND in receipt of one of the above benefits to either Bracknell Leisure Centre, Sandhurst Sports Centre, Edgbarrow Sports Centre or Downshire Golf Complex.


Acceptable forms of proof are:

- 1 Entitlement letter
- 2 Awards letter
- 3 Order book

PLUS

- 4 Identity showing name, address and postcode e.g. utility bill

- Complete the application form in this leaflet.
- Any dependents applying for the scheme will need to complete a separate application form and provide evidence of their name and permanent address. Acceptable forms of proof include passport, building society book, medical card etc.
- Present the completed application form and proof of eligibility to reception at one of the listed facilities.
- Once your application has been accepted it will take just one week to process before you can start making great savings at the specified facilities.



Terms and conditions

- The Leisure Saver Scheme is part of the e+ scheme, and as such the e+ terms and conditions apply.
- The Leisure Saver Scheme is renewable every 12 months.
- The e+ card must be presented every time the Leisure Saver Scheme is used.
- The Leisure Saver Scheme is not transferable.
- Bracknell Forest Council reserve the right to amend the scheme, alter the discount rate, change the availability of facilities and/or activities or cancel the scheme without notice.
- The discounts offered by the Leisure Saver Scheme only apply at specified facilities and for specified activities.
- Membership of the Leisure Saver Scheme does not entitle the user to advanced booking privileges although day membership will not be added to the price.
- Bracknell Forest Council reserve the right to refuse an application for the Leisure Saver Scheme, or withdraw its use if the conduct of the scheme member is considered to be inappropriate.

Be Fulfilled...

