

Report to Portfolio Holder for Lifestyles, Health and Well-being

Subject: Change of squash court use at Carlton Forum Leisure Centre

Date: 12.07.23

Author: Mark Smith, General Manager

Wards Affected All

1. Purpose

The report outlines the proposed change of use of one squash court at Carlton Forum Leisure Centre

2. Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendation(s)

That:

- 1) Approval is given for the permanent change of use of one squash court at Carlton Forum Leisure Centre

3 Background

3.1 Squash Provision in Nottingham

In Nottingham there are still a number of venues that have squash provision, which are within a relatively short drive time from Gedling:

- Calverton Leisure Centre – 1 court
- David Ross Sports Village – 7 courts
- Portland Leisure Centre – 2 courts

- Hucknall Leisure Centre - 2 courts
- Harvey Haddon Sports Complex – 3 courts
- Southwell Leisure Centre – 2 courts
- Rushcliffe arena – 3 courts
- Nottingham Squash Club (The Park) – 10 courts

3.2 Squash Usage and Popularity

Squash has been in a national decline for a number of years, and this trend has been translated into reducing income and usage at the sites. To try and stem the decline in popularity and encourage more use, the cost for hiring a squash court was not subjected to a price increase in the financial years 17/18, 19,20 or 22/23.

In 2018 one of the squash courts at Calverton Leisure Centre was converted into an extension of the fitness suite, which reflected the decreasing demand on squash facilities and the increasing growth in DNA health and fitness members at the site. This change of use was well received by customers of the site and did not create any negative comments in terms of reducing squash provision.

3.3 Squash at Carlton Forum

There are 4 squash courts at Carlton Forum Leisure Centre, two in a separate building in the rear car park, and two in the leisure centre adjacent to the fitness suite. The two courts in the rear car park are in a poor state of repair and have not been useable since January 2020.

When the sites re-opened after the Covid pandemic in July 2020, one of the squash courts in the main building was transformed into an extension of the fitness suite, to maintain the DNA health and fitness membership base whilst the social distancing measures were in place. The other court remained a bookable space for squash.

This fitness suite extension has proved extremely popular with DNA members at the site, and provided much needed additional floor space for further functional training. As of March 2023 the number of DNA members at Carlton Forum had finally grown to 2,000+ members, which was the size of the membership base pre-covid.

The usage of the fitness suite squash court was observed for two weeks and compared to the number of people playing squash during the same period. The results show the squash court is better utilised as a fitness space (776 attendances) compared to the number of people playing squash (103)

4 Proposal

4.1 It is proposed that:

- a) One squash court at Carlton Forum Leisure Centre is permanently changed into an extension of the fitness suite.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 If the squash court reverts back to being a bookable squash area, there is a significant risk that the DNA membership base will reduce and that will mean a decrease in the income generated at site.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The income generated from the one squash court in 22/23 was £11,635.

6.2 From the two week count of attendances in the fitness squash court (776) this works out at 388 visits in a week. We encourage our customers to use the fitness suite 3 times a month, so on this basis the 388 visits were down to 130 DNA members. The average monthly DNA membership price is £23, so $130 \times £23 = £2,990$ income per month.

Removing the fitness provision in the squash court could put this income at risk. We know from local competition and analysis of fitness suites that customers incorporate more functional training in their visits, and this requires more floor space to do so. National gym chains normally utilise industrial retail units and do not struggle to find sufficient floor space for functional training. It is therefore not unrealistic to assume that if the squash court reverts back to being a squash court we could lose up to 40% of these 130 DNA customers. Should this happen it would mean a loss of income of £1,196 per month, which is £14,352 in a full year.

Additionally, as the popularity of squash is waning, leaving the 2nd court as a squash court is unlikely to generate enough income to meet income targets (approx. £11k per court) and therefore the loss of income by DNA customers leaving far outweighs the income the court would generate as squash provision.

6.3 Any additional equipment or maintenance would be met from leisure's on going budgets

7 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications

8 Equalities Implications

8.1 The equality impact assessment can be found in appendix A

9 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

9.1 Not applicable

10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix A – Equality impact assessment

11 Background Papers

11.1 Not applicable

12 Reasons for Recommendations

12.1 To support the continued growth in fitness memberships at Carlton Forum and ensure the facilities at site are utilised effectively and aligned to public demand

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by: Tina Adams

Date: 11.07.2023

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by: Fran Whyley

Date: 22.06.23

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

Name of project, policy, function, service or proposal being assessed	Change of use of a squash court at Carlton Forum Leisure Centre				
The main objective of the report	To obtain approval for the continued use of one squash court as a an extension to the fitness suite				
What impact will this have on the following groups? Please note that you should consider both external and internal impact					
		Negative	Positive	Neutral	Comments
Gender	External			X	There will still be one squash court at Carlton Forum which can be booked by any member of the public. The pricing strategy for the hire of the court takes into account if the person hiring the court is over 65yrs, under 18yrs, living with a disability or living in receipt of certain benefits, and therefore continues to be inclusive. Creating more space for fitness suite users will ensure more space to work out, which will hopefully encourage more residents to become physically active.
	Internal			X	
Gender Reassignment	External			X	
	Internal			X	
Age	External			X	
	Internal			X	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	External			X	
	Internal			X	
Disability	External			X	
	Internal			X	
Race and Ethnicity	External			X	
	Internal			X	
Sexual orientation	External			X	
	Internal			X	
Religion or Belief (or no belief)	External			X	
	Internal			X	

Pregnancy and Maternity	External			X		
	Internal			X		
Other Groups e.g. any other vulnerable groups, rural isolation, deprived areas, low-income staff etc.)	External					
	Internal					
Is there evidence of a high disproportionate adverse or positive impact on any groups?	Yes	No				
Is there an opportunity to mitigate or alleviate any such impacts?	Yes	No				
Are there any gaps in information available (e.g. evidence) so that a complete assessment of different impacts is not possible?	Yes	No				
In response to the information provided above please provide a set of proposed actions including any consultation that is going to be carried out:						
Planned Actions	Timeframe	Success Measures	Responsible Officer			
Ongoing review of customer feedback regarding the change			Mark Smith			

Completing Officer	
Authorising Head or Service/Director	
Date	
Review date (if applicable)	